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[RELATIONS.]

DARCY'S CHILD;

OR,
THE DUKE'S CHOICE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Sybil's Inheritance," "Evelyn's Plot," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XIII.

Come o'er the sea,

Maiden, with me,

Mine through sunshine, storm, and snows.

"I FIND that we must not prolong our visit beyond to-morrow, Lady Mont Aspen," said Lady Beatrice, when she had opened the letters which the earl had handed to her on the morning but one after the interview between Lord Dudley and Rosalind. "Sir Ralph writes that he is about to take Lady Darcy to the Continent as a last resource, and place her in one of the watering establishments recommended to him, then he intends to give Geraldine some little idea of foreign countries by a short tour in Italy or Switzerland, he scarcely can decide which."

"Then there will be a general break-up of your party, Constance," observed Lady Greville. "I too have a most lordly summons from my liege master, and must lose no time in repairing to London en route for Brussels. Perhaps we shall meet on our journey, Lady Beatrice."

"Scarcely. Sir Ralph will start immediately on our arrival at the Manor," returned Lady Beatrice, "and our journey will be an exceptional one in consequence of Lady Darcy's extremely delicate state. However I will hope that we may claim your ladyship's hospitality before we return to England. Geraldine, my love, have you any especial orders to give your maid?"

But the girl had disappeared.

No one had marked her noiseless and stealthy flight from the breakfast-room through the blooming conservatory, whose rich blossoms well nigh concealed her form as she passed into its shelter, screened from the inquisitive eyes of all save the watchful ones of him who had learnt of late to know, as by instinct,

each of that fair creature's slightest movements, and, whether by accident or design, he generally found that his own and hers were in remarkable sympathy.

On this occasion the Duke of St. Maur managed to seize the first opportunity of terminating an animated argument on his peculiar breed of sporting dogs by a truly disgraceful surrender, and under cover of the triumphant satisfaction of the earl's appeal to his "backers" he lounged carelessly from the room.

But no sooner was he out of any observation from the windows of the apartment than he quickened his pace, and in a few seconds reached a leafy, sheltered nook in the park which he knew was a favourite seat of Geraldine Darcy when she could escape from the vigilance of her chaperone.

She was there now; he could catch the delicate hue of her gray morning dress as its folds glittered like silver in the sunlight, and he paused for a brief instant to gaze at the lovely picture she presented.

There were tears in her eyes as she sat with bowed head, and they dropped unconsciously on the white hands that lay on her knees in sorrowful abandonment to her sad mood.

"Geraldine!"

Never had a strain of sweetest music come more deliciously on the ear than that simple word to the young girl's heart.

It was the first time Clinton had ever called her by that name, and never had it possessed so sweet a sound as when it came from his lips.

She looked shyly up with a rapid but happy smile gleaming through the bright drops on her warm cheek. Then she shrank back into her corner like a guilty thing as the duke placed himself by her and looked half-sportively under her veiling hat.

"Are you so sorry to leave Mont Aspen?" he asked. "Is that the cause of these crystal drops?"

"Yes—that is, I am so grieved to leave it, and poor mamma is so ill, and—I am very unhappy," murmured the girl, in broken and softly low accents.

Then the climax came, and she fairly broke into a childlike fit of sobbing grief.

It was irresistible—at least to Clinton St. Maur. It was so touchingly dependent—so guileless in its unrestraint.

He drew her towards him and passed his arm lightly round her slight waist, and his lips kissed away the tears that were raining on his shoulder as the fair head drooped involuntarily on the welcome support. Then she suddenly sprang away from his caress.

"Please don't," she said, pleadingly. "This is very wrong. Indeed, indeed you should not: I can never forgive myself for allowing it."

Clinton gently detained her.

"Geraldine," he said, softly, "do you really think so ill of me as to believe I would trifle with so sweet and pure a creature as yourself? Do you believe for an instant that I would sully your innocence by the slightest caress, if I did not offer it in all holy love, and trusting for a return of that love? No, dearest. It may be that I did not intend so abrupt an avowal. It may be that I hesitated to agitate you by personally asking whether you could trust yourself to my care and tenderness for the rest of our lives. But this sudden prospect of parting and the hopes warmed up by these precious tears have altogether overcome my firmness. Geraldine, my own sweet pearl, my rose-bud, my lily, can you learn to love me? can you trust me?"

There was little need of answer. The involuntary nestling of her young form to his very heart, the heaving of her white bosom, the lightning flash of delight from her blue eyes spoke more loudly than words.

For some moments the two enjoyed a delicious dream of bliss.

Then Geraldine started up, as if a serpent had stung her.

"Oh, Clinton, I am so wrong. Papa and Lady Beatrice will never forgive me. What shall I do? Yet I could not help it when I knew that you loved me. I can scarcely believe it—it all seems so impossible that you could think of me, so silly and ignorant as they tell me I am."

She looked strangely like what her mother had been at a similar moment.

Would her fate be a happier one?

"My Geraldine, it seems sacrilege to breathe one word of hard worldliness in your innocent mind," returned the duke, half-smiling. "But at least I may assure you that you need not fear displeasure from those who have the care of your future. I am not unworthy of you in position or rank, and I think I can promise you a full and cordial consent to my wishes if they be sanctioned by your dear self. Will you place yourself in my keeping, and let me act for you, sweet one?"

Geraldine could have asked in return:

"Will I place myself in elysium and rest on a rock of adamant for safety?"

But a maiden instinct silenced the warm impulses of her nature, and she merely answered:

"Yes, gladly, willingly; you will do right in all things, and I am weak and erring."

"You are a true woman, born to be cherished and to be shielded from the veriest breath of danger or hardship," exclaimed Clinton, impetuously. "Dearest, I could not love you as I do were you more self-reliant, stronger. It is such gentle, dove-like natures that touch a man's very heart."

Geraldine listened and drank in each word as a thirsty soil absorbs the life moisture on which it depends for its very existence.

There was another who heard the words, and saw the look and gesture which accompanied them—saw them with a rack-like torture whose intensity such soft natures as Sir Ralph's daughter could not even comprehend.

Rosalind Tyrell had wandered into the green, verdant shades of the wooded park in the early hours of that sunny morn. She had fallen into the involuntary slumber of lingering weakness in the shade of an overhanging oak behind that leafy bower. She had been awakened by the tones of a voice which possessed a magic fascination for her senses, which had many a time sounded in her dreams during her hours of pain and feverish restlessness. Were they now uttered for her?

Once she had heard those tender, anxious accents addressed to herself, and felt rather than saw the earnest tenderness of his speaking eyes.

Was the dream repeated—the illusion renewed? She moved as if to test the waking realities that surrounded her. And in another minute she was gazing through the fissures of the entwining boughs. Once thus placed, she could not move—she was spell-bound, alike by fear of discovery and the paralyzing anguish that numbed her very limbs.

She exhausted the cup of suffering. She endured the last pangs of torturing agony as she watched the looks and caresses, and heard the soft, passionate tones of him whose love she would have died to win.

Then as the pair suddenly started to the sense of their suspicious position, and prepared to return to the society which is ever so wearisome to the lover's rapt visions, Rosalind sank once again on the turf and buried her face in its soft, mossy shelter.

"Oh, Heaven!" she murmured, "give me strength to tear this folly from my heart, and make her worthy of the noble heart she has won. Alas, alas! I feel that she cannot comprehend half the rich wealth, the lofty nobleness of the heart which has committed itself to her for its all of happiness."

Rosalind Tyrell had scarcely displayed more heroism in risking her life for her rival than in that prayer for her elevation to her own proud standard of excellence.

"Ralph, Ralph, in pity let me die at home! Let me have my child to soothe my last moments, let my eyes rest on her sweet young face for my last glimpse of earth."

It was Viola, Lady Darcy, who spoke in the passionate despair of the moment.

Seldom, indeed, did the fragile creature venture to risk her delicate, porcelain-like nature against the iron granite of her husband's will.

A naturally timid and colourless spirit had weakened to powerlessness under the pressure of a hard, unloving master-hand and of gradually encroaching health. But for once the long-concealed agony broke forth, and the mother's love overcame the wife's terror.

Sir Ralph looked with a cynical sneer on the pale, working features of the once-lovely Viola.

"This is even more than your usual senseless folly, Lady Darcy. The physicians assure me that you have no real disease, and that you only want the stimulus of complete change of scene and companions. I am acting according to my sense of duty in planning this journey for you, which you will most assuredly undertake. As to Geraldine, it would be the very height of absurdity to permit her to be with you. Unfortunately, she inherits already too much of your soft, helpless weakness, and does not need any

lessons from you in the newest arts of feminine folly."

Lady Darcy's pale cheek flushed with a rare emotion of indignation.

"Ralph, the doctors speak truth. I have no disease, save a hopeless and careless one—a broken heart. But if you would not be haunted to your dying day by the memory of her whom you have so cruelly wronged, whose rights you have disregarded, and whose feelings you have outraged, I demand of you this one boon. Beatrice Thornhill will not have long to wait for the long-coveted place I have held. But your union with her will be as unhallowed as your past love if you do not win my pardon—are I die."

"Your pardon! for what?" he sneered, though his eyes were averted from hers.

"Ralph, do you think I have been such a blind dupe, do you think I have not been slowly murdered by the constant misery I have endured for fifteen long years? I know that you have violated the vows that you swore at the altar. And, oh, Ralph, my husband, I have buried a yet more hideous secret in my heart of heart!"

He was moved at last.

He started up, his hand was pressed on her wasted arm till the fingers were printed on the soft flesh, and his eyes glared down on her with a rage that would usually have shaken her form to convulsive shiverings.

"Woman, what do you mean? Have you taken leave of your senses to dare to threaten me thus?"

"No," she returned, calmly, "no. It is but in the near and sure prospect of death that I have at length found them; it is but now I see things in the terrible light of eternity; and for that reason, my husband, I would warn you of the awful risk you are incurring, the necessity for repentance—ay, and more than repentance!"

"Speak," he repeated, hoarsely; "of what infamous, prying curiosity have you been guilty? What accomplice has been filling your mind with falsehood against me? I will tear the truth from your very heart's core if you do not confess at once."

"It is yourself, Ralph Darcy, and no one else, who has told me the horrid tale," she replied, with a faint but resolute voice. "In your dreams you have been haunted by the visions of the past, and you have spoken what in your waking hours was locked within your lips. Ralph, by degrees you have betrayed all!"

He had whitened for a few seconds as she spoke, then he rallied with a scornful laugh.

"Oh, indeed, and that is the mighty bugbear, is it, the terrible revelation that was to shake me to the very dust? A few wandering words, spoken under the influence of nightmare. Really, Viola, I did not think you were so stupid."

But she did not waver under his sneer.

"No, no, no! I would that it were, that you could prove it so, Ralph. I had rather suffer your utmost scorn, your severest punishment, than think of my own wasted love, my poor child's disgrace! Ralph, listen—close, close, lest the very walls hear the words!"

She bent her lips close to his ear; she whispered for a few moments words that would have been perfectly inaudible save to the strained senses to which they were addressed.

Then, with a gasping sob, a look of agonized pleading, she raised her head and sank back on her pillows.

"Ralph! Ralph! you cannot deny it! Your own lips have too often told the tale; and, harkye! I once tested their truth."

"You? how?"

The tones were almost as unlike the stern, resolute voice of Ralph Darcy as the trembling accents of his wife, and both involuntarily glanced round to see whether they could have proceeded from any other lips.

"It matters not how," she returned. "It is enough that my worst fears were realized. Ralph, look here!" She drew a small charred bag from her bosom and held it for a moment before his eyes. "Nay, it is of no use to attempt violence," she said, calmly, replacing it. "I have other and wretched proofs that are in a sure place of safety. I merely showed you this to prove that I was not wandering in my brain or deceiving you by useless misrepresentation."

For a second or two the baronet sat, doubting and speechless; he was too completely thunder-stricken to decide at once on his course. That weak tool had suddenly raised itself as a weapon against his power.

How was he to meet the unlooked-for attack? "Viola," he said, at last, soothingly, "depend on it this is but the heated visions of an invalid brain. I am as completely innocent of such hideous crimes as a Darcy should be, and I shall be able and willing to prove it to your satisfaction when my lips are once

unsealed. But at present I must not, even to you, betray the secret that has so long weighed on my conscience, and even escaped from my lips in the unbusiness of sleep. Can you doubt me, my wife?"

Poor thing!

How she gazed up at him in a wild hope that it might be as he said, that her worst terrors were groundless, and that she might once more gaze at her child without the terrible idea that she was tainted by hereditary crime, once more entertain a feeling of respect for her husband ere she quitted for ever this weary world.

"Ralph, in mercy say is this the truth? Are you—can you be innocent?"

"I might have expected more justice from my wife than to doubt me," he returned, with an air of injured and lofty rectitude. "However, I pardon it as the weakness of your nature and the fevered state of your brain. But do not let me hear again of such injurious fancies."

"Shall I ever know the truth? Can you tell me all one day?" she asked, sharply.

"I think so—I cannot yet tell. It depends on others besides myself," he returned. "But let that subject drop between us. You know now that you have been needlessly tormenting yourself, and I have expressed to you my pleasure as to your future movements. That must be sufficient."

"And Geraldine, will she not be with me?" asked the lady, pleadingly.

"Certainly not. She shall accompany us during most of the journey; then, when you are comfortably established, we shall leave you to the quiet you need, while I give her some of the advantages of which your weak and timid mind and body have hitherto deprived her. She will rejoice you in destitute."

"Yes, in heaven," said the invalid, calmly, "not on earth. I am dying, Ralph, and you know it well. May Heaven deal with you as you do with me and mine. I do not trust you, Ralph. It is no anxious care that prompts you to drag me from my home to suffer martyrdom in a foreign land. But I have vowed, and I will submit."

A gust of anger swept over the baronet's dark features. His hand clenched as if he would annihilate the frail creature before him at a blow.

Then his mood changed; he forced his lips into a smile.

"Foolish Viola, this is all part of the malady, and will vanish with your returning strength. I know my duty too well to yield to such fancies. We shall smile at all this some future day when our Geraldine is married and we return to old habits. Now try and rest. Farewell for a brief space, my wife."

He bent down and kissed her damp brow. She did not resist the caress, though she shivered down in her pillows as he moved away.

"Heaven help me," she murmured, "and protect my child!"

Sir Ralph walked moodily and hastily to his own apartment, and locked the door ere he permitted himself even a moment of reflection or relieved his agitation by a single word.

"She must not escape," he muttered. "She is dangerous now! She has sealed her fate, and all remorseful feeling must be stifled in self-interest—self-preservation. No; from this hour she must know no mercy from me. Why should my whole life be marred for a weak, idiotic being like that?"

"Yet how? I will not have her blood on my hands. That is a coarse style of proceeding, to say nothing of the crime it would be considered. No; there are many far more convenient and safe ways of providing for her future than any such violent proceedings. Yet, unless Perkins can be fully relied upon, all might fail even then."

"Good heavens! It is but a wretched life, after all, this dependence on menials for one's every step, and to hang on their caprice whether or not the fruit of one's courage and fertile brains shall be reaped in peace. I distrust Sanders far more than Perkins, however. I have a hold on one, but none on the other, save bribes to his avarice. Yet, if it is true that Marcus is dead, all is safe. I am older than he, and I and mine take precedence even if he had left a child. Courage, Ralph Darcy—a few brief months, one more daring blow, then I shall be safe, and the husband of the only woman I ever loved."

"Beatrice will be a fitting wife—she will do the honours of Darcy Manor as its mistress should. If she should give me an heir—a son—after Geraldine is Duchess of St. Maur! I desire no happier or prouder lot. Why should she not? It is on the cards perhaps, as a reward for my patience and plotting. Only one thing has failed me yet, and it may be even that failure will be over-ruled for success. I thought that Viola would never have troubled me so long. Yet if I had taken another wife, and had a son, Geraldine might have stood less chance of a dual coronet. Yes—in this respect has been perhaps wiser than I. It only depends on

energy and boldness to cleave the slow, quiet operations of my skilful hands. Foolish Viola has placed the instrument in my hands which was alone wanted to accomplish my wavering purpose. Now for action—prompt and decisive."

CHAPTER XIV.

And days may come, thou false one, yet,
When e'en those ties shall sever,
When thou wilt call with vain regret
On her thou lost for ever.

THE ambassador's balls at Brussels were crowded with the élite of the inhabitants and the strangers who frequent in crowds that cosmopolitan city. It was a brilliant assemblage, whose members had vied with each other in paying their respects to the newly returned wife of Sir Henry Greville, whose absence had cast a temporary obscurity over the gay hospitalities of the English Embassy.

Lady Greville was, of course, the centre of attraction for natives and foreigners as they first arrived in the brilliant saloons; and a gay and lovely little creature she looked in the tasteful and costly attires which might well have taken off ten years from the register of time. So thought all and said some in the crowd.

"How lovely Lady Greville is looking to-night," was the half-admiring, half-envious remark of the Countess Nestade, a Belgian belle of about the same age as and a presumed rival of the English matron.

"Yes, one would think she had been drinking the elixir of youth during her absence," returned Mr. Sackville, one of the *attachés* to the Legation, who was supposed to be one of Lady Greville's most devoted and attentive cavaliers. "But even her charms scarcely stand comparison with the splendid girl she introduced here in a most mysterious fashion on her return."

"Indeed! I did hear some rumour that a new face was seen by her side in her drives and at church," returned the countess, eagerly. "But I thought it might belong to some passing visitor. People are such birds of passage in our city that I never trouble myself even to look at any one who is not regularly introduced."

"I fancy you or any one else would look twice at the girl I mean," returned Mr. Sackville, coolly. "And certainly it shows either wonderful modesty or equally wonderful self-confidence on Lady Greville's part to risk such a rival near her throne."

"If you confess that there can be a brighter star than your own particular planet for worship she must indeed be an extraordinary meteor," returned the countess, sarcastically.

"Pardon me, countess. I look on all the dazzling beauties who surround me with most dispassionate philosophy, and have an unbounded admiration to scatter among them. Only in Lady Greville's case there is a mingling of duty and inclination in my display of homage," returned the *attaché*, coolly. "I never said or thought that she was unrivalled. How could it be possible?"

A judicious glance gave an atoning point to the innuendo.

"Well, respecting this *belle incognita*, who and what is she? What induced the ambassador to risk such a dangerous personage in her household?" said the countess, with a half-concealed smile.

"That is a mystery I cannot answer; and I sometimes think Sir Henry is equally in the dark—though, to do him justice, he displays neither displeasure nor suspicion," returned Mr. Sackville, significantly. "It is given out that Lady Greville met Miss Tyrell at the house of an old friend, and took such an unbounded fancy for her that she carried her off as her lawful spoil. Some persons fancy it was to give a new zest to the winter fêtes at the Embassy; some that the girl must be a distant relation, whom she is going to adopt, only that she is rather too young for such maternal fancies. But, hark! that is her voice. I mean the *belle débutante*; I would swear to it at the Antipodes."

As he spoke the brief symphony which had been scarcely heeded on the silver chords of a harp, was suddenly accompanied by the rich tones of a glorious voice, such as rarely is heard save in the musical atmosphere of a metropolitan opera house.

There was a hushed silence in these crowded saloons as the bewitching tones came swelling on the ears of those groups within reach of the music-room, and a general effort was made to approach and gain a sight of the vocalist.

Mr. Sackville and the Countess Nestade silently wound their dextrous way through the throng, and immediately in their wake was another of the guests, who had been a half-involuntary listener to their conversation.

Clinton St. Maur had arrived in Brussels only that very day, en route for Kissingen, and had entered the saloons too late to make his way without sending the apartment to which the hostess had retired

after performing the duties that devolved upon her at the door of her long suite of saloons.

He had been patiently waiting for a break in the dancing, which was going on at his arrival, to attempt the hazardous passage to the interior, when a pause in their waltz had made him an unintentional eavesdropper to part of the dialogue between the countess and her partner till their change of position rendered it possible for him to move in the direction of the "voice."

"Whose voice?"

That was the question that for the moment made him most blamably regardless of the laws of etiquette, and banished the primary idea of discovering Lady Greville when the dance was concluded.

It was impossible—simply impossible—that the half-jesting description of the sarcastic *attaché* could apply to the huntsman's daughter.

Was he bewitched that he could not at once suppose Lady Greville might have other friends than Lady Mont Aspen, and other *protégées* than Rosalind Tyrell among her English connexions?

He pushed on as quickly as bare politeness could allow, and once during the progress the enchanting sounds ceased, and the sudden silence was broken by a loud and rapturous *encore*, which he could make out was seconded by the pleadings of a voice that seemed familiar to him.

Just as he managed to obtain a position which gave him a glimpse of the performer the last verse of the aria was again commenced.

But all sound was as it were swallowed up and deadened by the electrical effect of the vision that then met his eyes and for the moment fairly bewildered his senses.

Those beautiful features—animated by the excitement of the scene into an unusual brightness—the graceful form attired in an elegant though studiously simple toilet—the rich hair arranged by the skilful fingers of a well-trained maid—were strangely like, yet most incredibly different, to the face and figure and humble dress of the daughter of Walter Tyrell, Lord Mont Aspen's huntsman.

Then how impossible it was for that obscure maiden to have attained such rare excellence in the heavenly art which is instinct to none. Clinton St. Maur well knew that whatever might be nature's gifts nothing but accomplished training could have attained such perfection, such delicacy of execution, such truth of intonation as had won the plaudits and entranced the attention of that high-born group.

Yet as he gazed his lingering doubts gradually vanished.

He had never seen elsewhere such soul-lit eyes, such finely cut features, such a noble brow. No, not even his own Geraldine could boast such perfect beauty as the humbly born maiden of the forest, and, to crown the certainty thus arrived at, he perceived that Lord Dudley Vyrian was standing, behind her chair with one hand resting on its back in familiar ease of near acquaintanceship. By her side was Sir Henry Greville, radiant with musical delight at the success of his new guest, and in the distance he perceived Lady Greville, with eyes fixed on the group in earnest if not perfectly satisfied observation. The song again finished, both Lord Dudley and the host simultaneously offered an arm to conduct the vocalist from the harp.

Rosalind hesitated for a brief moment, then she placed her hand within Sir Henry's, and the still young and handsome ambassador led her with an air of the most courteous and kind friendship into a conservatory, which his lady's English tastes had induced him to build at the end of the suite of reception apartments.

"You must be fatigued with your exertions. Let me fetch you an ice and some wine," said the high-born host. "Here is a seat. It will be cooler here than in the drawing-rooms."

"Allow me, Sir Henry," interposed Lord Dudley. "I see two or three strange guests waiting to speak to you. St. Maur, how do you do? I had no idea you had arrived. I believed you knew Sir Henry already; if not, give me the pleasure of introducing you."

Going through the brief form, the young nobleman hurried off, leaving his rival fully occupied by the necessity of entertaining the duke while he sought the required refreshment for the fair singer. In a few seconds he returned, and his quick eye at once perceived that the two gentlemen had joined Lady Greville and were in polite if not cordial conversation with each other.

With a well-pleased smile Lord Dudley went on his mission into the conservatory.

"I really would not have troubled you," said Rosalind, with a cold bow of acknowledgment. "I thought Sir Henry was kind enough to propose getting me some refreshment, and I knew he disliked being refused when he intends a benefit, but—"

"You have not the same consideration for my

feelings; is it not so, Miss Tyrell?" interposed Dudley, reproachfully. "Yet I am an older friend than your host."

"An older acquaintance. I scarcely can think of calling either friends," returned the girl, in the same proud, measured manner. "It is not for one so humbly born to dream of such impossibilities. It is not fit for you, my lord, to talk such absurdities," she added, impatiently, as Lord Dudley's deprecating gesture warned her he was about to differ from her proposition.

"You are right! quite right!" said the young man, in a low, earnest tone. "I cannot be a friend, Miss Tyrell, because I could never be content with the name or the feeling. Rosalind, can you not guess why? Can you not read the feelings that have prompted my zeal on your behalf, my unwearied exertions to discover your missing father, my journey hither to give you an account of my success or failure?"

She hastily rose.

"Lord Dudley, this is cruel. Surely the house of Sir Henry Greville is no place for an insult to one under his protection, and this scene is not one for recalling such wretched memories. Let me pass, if you please, my lord," she added as he stood with a respectful, deprecating air before her.

"Rosalind! Heaven is my witness that I intend you no insult. It is the highest compliment that I have it in my power to pay a woman when I tell you that you are the only one I ever loved—the only one that I could make my wife. Is not this enough, Rosalind?"

She looked up at him with a kind of bewildered surprise that certainly had little either of gratified vanity or of flattered pleasure in its expression.

"Lord Dudley, if you are serious, I am very, very sorry. It is utterly useless, impossible on every account. Please never even think of it again."

"Why, Rosalind? Have you been previously won by some happier if more humble suitor?" asked Lord Dudley, with imperturbable calmness. "Surely not by Eustace Downes?"

"Eustace Downes!" repeated the girl, in an accent of ineffable scorn. "It ought not to occur to you to question me thus, Lord Dudley, but at least it is due to myself and my dear father to clear such a degrading idea from your mind. It is enough that you are utterly in the wrong in such a thought. I shall answer no more such uncalled-for questions. Once more, please to end this distressing conversation," she added, in an agitated tone, which made Lord Dudley survey her more closely, then follow the direction of her gaze till he caught a glimpse of the duke and Sir Henry Greville at the end of the next saloon.

"I am answered, and I will obey you, Miss Tyrell, so far as to leave you now," he said, quietly; "but I form my own opinion on the subject, and I certainly do not take your answer now. I will leave the proposal I have made to you under your consideration, and you may perhaps think differently as to its reception on farther reflection. And—perhaps it would be as well for you to consult your temporary guardian before you dismiss it altogether."

Lord Dudley sauntered from the floral apartment with as cool and insouciant an air as if he had been merely asking his fair companion to dance.

"Ah, Sir Henry, I see you are on your way to ascertain my good faith," he said, lightly, as he passed the baronet. "It is quite unnecessary, I assure you, for I have supplied Miss Tyrell's wants most sedulously, and I have, by her own request, left her to rest a little and think over the success of the night," he added, meaningly.

"We will just go and ascertain her pleasure, at any rate, St. Maur," said Sir Henry, cheerfully. "She really has been such an attraction this evening that I feel it is due to her to take some care of her, especially as she had a recent illness, I understand. I should like to introduce you to her; as you are such a bird of passage it may be your only opportunity."

"A very good pretext," laughed Lord Dudley to the *attaché* as he passed him on his way to Lady Greville's sofa. "I really was not aware that matters were so serious, or I would not on any account have put myself in the way. But, when a man has such a charming wife, one does not suppose he has eyes for even such a divinity as the Rosalind—eh, Sackville?"

With a mutual shrug and smile the two went on their respective ways.

"Miss Tyrell, let me present the Duke of St. Maur to you," said Sir Henry as they approached the flushed and agitated girl—who instinctively drew near to her host, as if for protection from the new difficulties that awaited her.

Clinton marked the action and the confiding look; he read the flutter in the usually proud girl's bosom, and he interpreted its cause with cruel injustice.

"I have seen the Duke of St. Maur in England,"

she said, with a haughty bow, a strange contrast to her sweet, frank smile at his companion.

Clinton was perhaps astonished at the coolness which spared him any perplexity as to the recognition from which she might have shrunk.

"Perhaps you will pardon my retiring now, Sir Henry," she said, "I am weary, and my head aches."

Poor girl, was it not heart aching and spirit weariness that brought that impatient, pleading look to her pale face!

"Do not think me a barbarian if I ask for one more favour, Miss Tyrell," said Sir Henry, softly. "But the Prince of Monaco has just expressed such a great desire to hear you sing—and he is really almost of royal rank—I scarcely know how to refuse him. So if you could, without real distress, help me out of the dilemma—"

"I am bound to do anything you ask, Sir Henry," said the girl, with a sweetness that had yet something of pride in it. "What do you wish me to sing?"

"That beautiful air of Maguerite from 'Faust,' when she is doubting the innocence of her love, said the ambassador. "It suits your voice so admirably."

"And feelings also," muttered Clinton, with darkening brow as Rosalind passed him on Sir Henry's arm.

Perhaps she heard him, for her hand trembled on her companion's arm, and the tears rose to her eyes, though she retained them resolutely under the bent lids.

"You are really ill, I fear; I must not be cruel enough to press you," said Sir Henry, tenderly, as he perceived her agitation.

"No, no, I am quite well, only a little tired. Where is Lady Greville?" she added, looking round. "Is that the prince with her whom I am to sing for?"

The lady's eyes were fixed with a cold sternness on the girl as she met her inquiring glance, and when she came forward with the distinguished foreigner she spoke with a haughty asperity that Rosalind had never experienced from her before.

"Be so kind as to sing for us, if you please Miss Tyrell. I begged Sir Henry to bring you some time since, as the prince expressed a wish to hear you."

"And no wonder," said the high-born foreigner on whose arm she was leaning, "when I am absolutely delicious on the subject of sweet sounds, and I am told you are simply a nightingale in fairer form, mademoiselle."

"Your highness would unnerve me sadly if I could think you believe such exaggerated reports," returned the girl, in pure Italian, such as the prince might have heard from Tuscan lips. "But I can only do my best to obey Lady Greville's wishes, and those of your highness, even at the risk of disappointing you."

The girl calmly placed herself at the piano without giving time for her companions to lead her to her chair, and in an instant began the air that Sir Henry had requested.

She did not fail, in spite of the trying circumstances in which she was placed.

Her pride perhaps came to her aid, and she determined that those who had scorned her and the kindly host who protected her should confess that at least she did not discredit their expectations.

Never perhaps had such passionate force of expression, such brilliant execution, burst from her lips.

She actually petrified Clinton St. Maur and alarmed the kind-hearted Sir Henry, while Lady Greville's pretty face grew more discontented and gloomy with every moment.

Only the prince could express his flowing thanks and graceful compliments as he himself led her from the instrument and placed her in a luxurious fauteuil, near which he remained for several minutes in conversation with one who united so many attractions, even for a princely admirer.

When Clinton St. Maur watched her retreating form as she made her graceful courtesy to her illustrious companion he bewildered astonishment was complete.

"Well, St. Maur, what do you think of our recluse maiden?" asked Lord Dudley, placing his arm within Clinton's and strolling into a remote smoking-room as the saloons thinned. "I'm not such a bad judge after all; you see the prince was actually struck dumb, and Sir Henry spoons quite enough for a married man. No wonder a fellow should expect to encounter some little obstacles with such a creature."

"I never supposed you to be a bad judge, though I plead guilty to non-comprehension as to the particular matter to which you are referring," said the duke, coldly.

"Don't let your cigar out and I'll tell you," resumed Lord Dudley, pushing some cognac and lemonade towards Clinton, and puffing away furiously at his own havannah. "The truth is, I am going in for this maiden of low degree and high gifts, and don't think she'll disgrace the Vyvians when her

picture appears in the family portraits—ah, St. Maur?"

"It's a matter of taste," said the duke, bitterly. "I for one have a weakness for pure blood and unstained name. I'd not marry an angel with a blot on her ancestry—at least, within the last generation or so."

"Ah, you're lucky to fall in love with an heiress, and a Darcy, sans reproche, but it's not every fellow can be so fortunate, you see," returned Lord Dudley, coolly.

"Of course the lady has accepted you?" said Clinton, with a strange bitterness. "I confess I should scarcely have thought it to judge from her sweet smiles on Greville."

"Oh, if the fair Ida is not jealous, I am not. I rather like to see my choice backed up by kings and princes. However, I thought it but fair to tell you, Clinton, as you had a start before me, only you did not take advantage of it."

"I—I dream of a menial's daughter!" exclaimed the duke, vehemently. "No, not if she were a spotless angel—which circumstances tend to disprove—never would I bestow one thought of love on this wandering damsel. I tell you, Vyvian, I would not stake one hour of my life, one jewel of my coronet, on Rosalind Tyrell's truth and purity."

As he spoke a female figure glided past the window. The next instant there was a heavy fall on the gravel walk.

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

ALBUMEN FROM BLOOD.—Albumen is now produced on a large scale, at Pesth, Hungary, and in North Germany, from the blood of animals. The serum separating when blood coagulates consists chiefly of albumen. The best quality of albumen thus obtained is transparent and soluble in water, and is used for mordanting yarns and cloth. At Pesth, blood is dried in flat iron pans, by exposure to air at a temperature of from 100 to 112 deg. Fah. From 3,000 lbs. of blood about 110 lbs. of albumen are obtained, at a cost of 6*l.*; 16,200 eggs would yield the same amount of albumen, at a cost of 20*l.* Although the cost of egg albumen is three times as great as that of blood albumen, the former is preferred for dyeing purposes, on account of its purity. Blood albumen of a second quality, darker in colour, but nearly all soluble in water, is used largely in the process of refining sugar.

CHINESE VARNISH.—Among the raw stuffs sent by Dr. Von Scherzer from Pekin was one called schio-lias, a kind of varnish which is employed for varnishing all kinds of wooden things, and has the property of making these articles water-tight. Dr. Von Scherzer has seen wooden chests in Pekin which have been over Siberia to St. Petersburg and back, and still remain sound and water-tight. Even baskets of straw used for the transport of oil are, by means of this varnish, made perfectly fit for the purpose. Pasteboard, by its use, becomes, both in appearance and firmness, like wood. Most exposed wood-work is coated with schio-lias, which gives it an ugly, red appearance, but it gains in durability. This varnish was examined by the Australian Agricultural Department, and Dr. Von Scherzer's communication was fully corroborated. The "Weiner Gewerbezeitung" also made trials with it. By mixing together three parts of fresh, beaten, defibrinated blood, four parts of slacked lime, and some alum, a thin, sticky mass is obtained which is immediately ready for use. Articles which are required to be particularly water-tight are varnished twice or at most three times by the Chinese. In Europe this varnish is not yet made, although it is one of the surest and best ways of making wooden articles perfectly water-tight.

THEORY OF BICYCLE RIDING.

WHEN we reflect that a body once in motion tends to remain in motion unless robbed of that motion by some resisting medium or by friction, we feel surprised that walking should tire us so soon as it does. The fatigue we experience in walking does not arise from giving motion to our bodies, but in sustaining the weight of them and balancing ourselves on one leg. A number of muscles are engaged in that operation besides those by which we push ourselves forward.

A horse on a railway can move twenty tons in two trucks; each truck alone would weigh five tons when empty, and sufficient to crush him to the earth if he had to carry that weight. On the water a still greater weight can be moved, but there the greater portion of the labour is required in moving the water on one side, not in moving the barge. Such is the vast difference between moving a body and sustaining the weight of that body. The utility of all wheel vehicles rests on that principle—the wheels support the weight. If the roads are smooth, all the force applied becomes motion in the required direc-

tion; if rough, there is a vertical motion against gravity, which causes a terrible waste of power. It is this wasted power which shakes the ground, and makes the most lofty buildings quiver to their very tops. When we consider the force to do all this is drawn from the muscles of the horses, and is a dead loss to the forward motion required, we see how vastly important good roads are, and how far we are off from possessing them. It was the rail, not steam, that drove coaches off the road.

Now the utility of the bicycle as an aid to pedestrianism follows almost as a necessary consequence from the principles just alluded to. If it is of no use in that respect, then the crank must waste the greater portion of the power applied to it, and must do so in all other cases where it is used for converting a circular motion into a right line one. We know the crank has many faults. It is only when it stands at right angles to the direction the force is acting that it gives out the power in the required way. As soon as it leaves that position a portion of the force is used in pushing the axle against the bearings, which lost portion rapidly increases until the crank is in a line with the direction of the acting force, when, of course, all the power would be wasted; this is the dead point. A bicycle rider ought to give the push only when the crank stands at about right angles to his leg, or the direction he pushes in. Fortunately, the direction of the force can be altered a little by bending the knee, etc., so as to follow the crank. Here lies the art of the rider, not in balancing the machine—that is nothing. The wheel and crank are only a lever, the power being applied to the short end, the resistance to the long, the bearings being the fulcrum. The usual proportion of the crank to the radius of the wheel is as one to three; hence the force to be applied to the former must be three times what it would be in mere walking—I mean propelling force—because in the latter case the body—that is the weight—goes no faster than the power, or legs, consequently the force required is single; but in riding a velocipede we go forward three times faster than the legs do in performing their work.

The common expression is when we gain speed we lose power. That is wrong, strictly speaking, for there is no loss in the case; speed is power—that is, the momentum is, and contains all the power we put into it. It will now be said by the enemy—and everything new in this country has enemies, active in proportion to their natural inferiority—where is the gain to pedestrianism? We go three times as fast, it may be, but then we use three times the exertion. We can obtain the same end by running. I answer yes, and save the loss by friction and the weight of the machine. The gain lies, as in all other wheel conveyances, in the weight being practically annihilated, leaving nothing for the power to do but give motion. If the road be perfect, the force required to drive a bicycle is merely nominal, and the pleasure derived greater than any other conveyance I am acquainted with. I have ridden on the asphalt in Cheapside early in the morning, and also on the footpaths in a certain park. The latter was, perhaps, the most delightful riding I ever had. The ground was hard, and bartered a little, but very broad. I rode across them. The sensation was exactly like sailing in a boat over the heavy swell of the Atlantic when the sea was smooth in other respects. The pleasure, no doubt, was enhanced by the consciousness of being your own propelling power, and the pleasure derived by the using of your muscles.

I must tell my brother riders I rode in that park in perfect ignorance that it was against the regulations, which I only discovered afterwards. It was between six and seven in the morning, and no person about. If the authorities knew the great and healthy pleasure it is to us to ride on the broad footpaths of the parks, they would give permission, by ticket, perhaps, to us to do so early in the morning. As to injuring the walks, it is out of the question. The light wheel rolling over does less injury than the foot, especially when covered with rubber, as most good machines are.

The reason riding up-hill is always hard work is this. In walking we have only to use the force necessary in going the same horizontal distance, and what is necessary to raise the body to the height of the hill. There is no tendency to run back, the friction of the shoe being quite sufficient to prevent that. But in bicycle riding we have to resist that tendency, which is so great from the almost entire absence of friction. In going down hill we get the full benefit, and agreeable is the change; there is variety in hilly ground.

T. S. R.

THE Pope has declined to accept the title of Pius the Great and the throne of gold which had been offered to him.

THE largest rope in the world has been completed in Birmingham. It is about six miles long, five and a quarter inches in circumference, and weighs over sixty tons.



[THE PLOT THICKENS.]

SWEET EGLANTINE, OR, THE STRANGE UNKNOWN.

BY THE

Author of "Evander," "Heart's Content," &c., &c.

CHAPTER VII.

What mournful theme
Invites the ready sorrows of your souls?

EVERYTHING seemed to swim before Eglantine's eyes. The handsome room with its splendid modern furniture, the light curtains fringing the blinds closely drawn down to keep out the heat of the sun, the gold fish lazily swimming in a glass bowl, the gaudy-plumaged birds hopping from perch to perch in their spacious cage, and the tinkling spray of the water which ever rose and fell in the moss-covered fountain, filled with ornamental rock-work.

She saw nothing distinctly, though she kept her eyes fixed upon the Countess of Carysmode's expressive countenance, in which she read pity and concern rather than severity and dislike.

"I have heard, my dear, lately, quite lately," said her ladyship, in a tone which was kind and considerate, though low, "that your father was never married to your mother; do not start, be calm, I beg of you, and you are consequently a natural child. I shall ever entertain the greatest possible respect and regard for you, though of course I cannot ask you to stay an hour longer in my house, where you will be constantly meeting young ladies of high family and position, who would not like to be brought in contact with any one upon whom such a stain rested."

It is doubtful whether poor Eglantine heard the conclusion of the countess's speech: her head drooped, the hot blood rushed with electric speed to her neck, shoulders, and face, which it crimsoned with the blush of shame. The shock was so unexpected, so sudden, the news so terrible, that for a moment she was as one stunned and stupefied. Was she destined henceforward to be a Pariah from society, a wretched outcast with whom no one would associate? Oh! it was dreadful to think of the consequences of the sin committed by her father and mother, which were to fall so heavily upon her devoted head.

"Be calm, child," continued Lady Carysmode. "Go and question your father. If I am misinformed, he will know how to punish your traducer, who has given me leave to mention his name; and it is this fact which leads me so firmly to believe the story. Were it not true he would scarcely lay himself open to the penalty of an action for defamation of character."

Eglantine began to grow braver as the shock passed. She could not credit the infamous allegation. Her father had always spoken so highly of her poor dead mother, whose memory was enshrined in the holiest portion of the girl's heart. It had been a sort of creed with her to look upon her mother as a saint in heaven, and to hear her vilely aspersed now was almost more than she could bear.

"Thank you for telling me this, Lady Carysmode," she said, in a voice which was touching in its sadness. It was a monotone, and like a harp with one string, its effect impressively affecting. "It is very hard for me to hear such a thing, but in such cases one ought to be frank. You have been frank with me, and I am grateful. If it is true that my poor mother's memory is blackened with such a stain, I cannot hope to see you again. I must accept my fate, yet I feel confident that you have been misinformed. Who is your friend? Tell me his name that I may go to my father and acquaint him with it. If he has told a falsehood, he will know how to punish and make him retract. Oh!" added the poor girl, unable to bear her bitter reflection. "It is so cruel of any one to invent such a calumny, the effect of which falls upon me. I am not conscious of having done any one harm so as to make an enemy."

"Here is the gentleman's card," replied the countess. "He is, in fact, no particular friend of mine, as I have not seen him before to-day. His acquaintance is with Linton, not with me. Take it and show it to your father."

Eglantine took the card and with dazed eyes read:

"Mr. George Vigers Morgan. The Wilds."

"He!" she cried. "Can it be he? What is his object in persecuting me?"

"That is a question I am unable to reply to," answered Lady Carysmode, growing colder as if she wished to deprecate and avoid any conversation upon this painful subject. "You will excuse me I know, Miss Passingham, if I run away from you, as I have several matters of importance to attend to. Will you have some lunch sent in to you? It is now half-past one; in an hour the carriage will be ready to take you home. If I should be too much engaged to see you before you start, which I shall regret, be good enough to tell your father that I shall be glad to see him, if he should wish to speak to me on the subject of the communication I have just made to you."

Here the feeling of the proud and haughty aristocrat peeped out, and this speech, though very polite and veiled, so as to hide the cold and cutting dismissal, roused Eglantine's latent pride.

"Thank you. I do not require any lunch," she

said; "nor would I trespass so far on your kindness as to avail myself of the offer of your carriage if the distance between Shirley and Stanstead was not so great as to make it utterly impossible for me to walk, and other conveyances are impracticable. My father shall have your ladyship's message. For your kindness to me while I have been staying in your house I am much obliged. I hope I may some day have an opportunity of returning it."

The Countess of Carysmode had walked towards the door, but, as if actuated by some kindly impulse, she stopped and looked at Eglantine, then she walked towards her and extended her hand, saying:

"You have my deepest sympathy, Miss Passingham. We part friends. I am obliged to act as I do. Society would condemn me if I became your champion. What this Mr. Vigers Morgan has said to me he will say to others. My position compels me to appear harsh. Heaven bless you! Pray to it to help you through this trial."

Eglantine grasped her hand spasmodically. Words rose to her lips, but she was unable to utter them. A choking sensation in her throat warned her that she was about to cry, and when the countess left the apartment she buried her face in her hands and wept bitterly, thus relieving her over-charged heart.

In an hour's time a servant informed her that the carriage was waiting. She hastily made her toilet, finding her small valise had been carefully packed, and started for home without seeing any one. Again the hot blood rushed to her face, for to leave Shirley Hall thus was humiliating. Neither the Earl of Carysmode nor his son, Lord Linton, wished her good-bye, and she fancied that there was a peculiar expression about the faces of the servants, as if they knew that she was leaving in disgrace.

As she was driven quickly home, through the pleasantly wooded roads and lanes, she wondered if what she had been told was true, if she were to be shunned and avoided by every one, if this stain were to rest upon her as the brand remained upon the brow of Cain; she wondered, too, how her father would receive the news, and why Mr. Vigers Morgan, who had saved her life, should all at once persecute her so cruelly.

How slowly the horses seemed to go, thorough-breds though they were, to whom ten miles an hour were no difficult achievement. She thought it an age before she arrived at Medusa Lodge. When its welcome portals were reached she saw her father on the lawn with Ede Block, hoisting some flag. It was the anniversary of some battle he had been in, and he was celebrating the event according to his usual custom.

"What! back already, my dear?" exclaimed the old man as he hastened to the carriage and assisted her to alight. "I did not expect you so soon."

He told the servants of the Earl of Carysmede that they could put the horses up if they liked, and have what refreshment the kitchen afforded, but they civilly declined, having perhaps received orders to do so, and drove away. Captain Passingham appeared a little astonished, but immediately turned his attention again to his daughter, and did not fail to notice her altered appearance.

Her eyes were wet with recent tears and the lids swollen; her cheek flushed and paled by turns, and she clung to his arm convulsively.

"Something has happened," he exclaimed, "I know it. This sudden return—you have been insulted. What—"

She cut short his somewhat violent and impatient utterance by saying:

"Not here, papa. Come indoors and I will tell you what has taken place."

He stood like one rooted to the spot. She gently disengaged her arm and led the way to the house, he following her like one in a dream.

When they reached the drawing-room Eglantine sank into a chair. Her father stood before her with his arms crossed, looking down upon her, puzzled to know what to think—what to dread.

"Papa," said Eglantine, with the bravery of a true heroine, "I am trying to be firm and calm, but if you only know how my heart was torn you would pity me. It is dreadful that this disclosure should come from me to you; but it must—it must."

She pressed her hand to her breast as if to still the palpitation of her heart. Captain Passingham remained hard and stern, saying nothing, waiting for her to speak.

"They have sent me home from the castle because—because some one has said that you were not married to my mother," continued Eglantine, who pressed her hands together till the nails ran into the flesh. "It is not I, dear papa, who brings this accusation against you. You know whether the charge is false or true. The Countess told me and suggested that I should return to you, and—"

She paused. The alteration in Captain Passingham's appearance was so striking as to alarm her. The veins on his forehead were swollen to bursting and stood out like blue cords. His teeth were set closely together, and the gathering passion was terrible to witness.

"Who told you this?" he said, at last, in a hoarse voice; "or rather who was the Countess of Carysmede's informant? She could not make a charge of this sort against you—against me without some authority."

Eglantine gave him the card:

"Morgan," he repeated, slowly, "Vigers Morgan. I know no one of that name. I have no enemy named Morgan."

He heaved a deep sigh of relief, but presently the old careworn look came over him again, and anger once more was uppermost.

"This is the new comer at the Wilds," he went on. "Why should he molest me? It was he, too, who saved you from the buffalo. This is odd."

His head fell on his breast and he was plunged into deep thought.

Eglantine's little hand touched him lightly. He started.

"Was she your wife?" murmured Eglantine, looking up at him with a beseeching expression.

The strong man was violently agitated. His frame shook like a tree in a storm.

"No, she was not," he exclaimed, still more hoarsely. "I will not speak falsely to my own child. It was not my fault. You shall know all presently, but your mother was not my wife."

Those terrible words fell upon Eglantine like a death-blow. The knell of all her hopes had sounded. No matter what explanation lay in the background the fatal truth was declared. She was illegitimate. The finger of scorn could be pointed at her. The Countess of Carysmede had rightly dismissed her with ignominy, for she was the child of shame.

Captain Passingham felt his limbs tremble under him. He could scarcely stand, and he staggered to a seat.

"Can my forebodings be coming true?" he said, speaking as if to himself. "Are my fears realized? If my sworn enemy has found me out, he is taking the right road to vengeance by stabbing me through my own child."

As for Eglantine, she was incapable of urging anything farther now. Her energy was exhausted; she lay prostrate. Though she would gladly have comforted her father she knew not what to say, and even if she had had the words ready she lacked the strength to utter them.

An hour passed before either of them recovered from the effects of the blow. Captain Passingham was the first to rise. He went to a sideboard, and, pouring out half a tumblerful of brandy, drank it at a draught.

"Eglantine," he said, approaching her.

She looked wildly at him, but made no answer.

"Don't shrink from me, my child," he said, in a tone which showed how much he was hurt at her attitude. "I did not wrong your mother. Hear my story, listen to my vindication. Will you listen to me?"

She inclined her head in token of assent.

It was a wild, romantic story that he told her, and though the telling of it did not take ten minutes it contained the essence of one of those life romances that so startle us when they are revealed to the public gaze.

Her mother's name was Harriet Rendle. She was but two-and-twenty when Captain Passingham met her. To see her was to love her. The beauty of which she boasted was of a pensive kind. Her melancholy rather heightened her natural charms. She passed as a widow—her husband, people said, had died a month after her marriage—but the truth was this: Her husband, who held a confidential position in a bank, committed forgery, and to avoid imprisonment and disgrace fled to New Zealand on the very night of her marriage, the news reaching him as he left the church with his young and blushing bride on his arm that his crime was discovered and that the officers of justice were on his track. He went, and she never heard of him again, though he begged her to fly with him. Her love had changed to horror, if not to hatred, when she found what sort of a man she had allied herself with. Her life was blighted; but Captain Passingham's affection made an impression upon her, and they were to have been married, but some of her husband's relations heard of this step on her part, and interfered to prevent her committing bigamy. They removed to another part of the country, but their actions were watched, and wherever they went their story preceded or followed them. No clergyman would marry them until authentic news of her first husband's death was received.

"That did not come to hand until after your mother's death, which occurred in three years," concluded the captain, "and during that time you, my dear, were born. He died in a drunken brawl in a pot-house at Wellington, New Zealand," and she, saint that she was, died from a broken heart. All my skill availed nothing to comfort her. It was nothing to her that I tried fifteen different times to get a priest to marry us, and that at last the marriage service was read by a friend of mine in holy orders. The worm had penetrated to the core, and she faded away. If we were wrong," he added, savagely, "you must blame the laws of man, and the wickedness and the cruelty of man, not the laws of Heaven."

"Hush, father!" said Eglantine, softly. "This is very sad, I do not blame you. It is presumptuous for a child to censure a parent. I am sorry for poor mamma—hers was a melancholy fate—but what concerns us at present is not so much the past as the present. Mr. Morgan was justified in what he said, he will repeat it probably, as he has divulged the story to the Countess of Carysmede, and I shall be shut out from all society."

"Do you long for society, Eglantine?" her father asked, looking at her anxiously.

"No, I cannot say that I long for it," she answered. "But it is so natural for a girl of my age to wish to mix with the families in the county, to see a little gaiety, to mix with the world in fact."

"Up to the present time you have not done so."

She remained silent.

"It was an unfortunate day for us when Lady Carysmede darkened my doors," continued Captain Passingham, bitterly, "a day I shall regret all my life if I live to be as old as Methuselah. Going to her house and seeing her friends have put all these ideas into your head."

"It was by your wish I went," said Eglantine, mildly.

The captain could not answer this observation. He paced the room restlessly, talking in a quick, sulky manner as he did so.

"I have been too happy," he exclaimed. "No one can be perfectly happy for any length of time together on this wretched earth. I ought to have known that some snake would have crept into my Paradise, and been prepared for this storm. Indeed I have had my presentiments."

"Of what, papa?" asked Eglantine.

"That my enemy would find me out. You know that I told you all at dinner a week or two back how a man had sworn to be revenged upon me because I did only my duty as commander of a ship in the British Navy. He swore he would have his vengeance if he waited twenty years for it. My enemy has found me out."

"Who is he, papa?"

"How should I know?" replied Captain Passingham, abruptly, halting in his uneasy walk; "unless it be this Vigers Morgan. I'll drive over to him; I'll call upon him. If this persecution on his part is to go on, he shall kill me or I will him."

Alarmed at his vehemence, Eglantine implored him to do nothing desperate.

"It all comes upon me at once, my girl," said he

"Leon has gone away. That was the first blow. I loved that wayward boy as if he had been my own son; all I wished him to do was to work. I would have supported him with capital if he had learnt any trade or profession he had a mind to. But no. When I spoke seriously to him, and we had a word or two, he took himself off and has never since had the decency to let me know whether he is alive or dead. Now you are attacked, and this insolent Countess of Carysmede has turned you out of her house as if you were a leper. Where is it all to end?"

"We must trust in Heaven, papa," Eglantine said. "There is but one bright speck in the darkened horizon that I can see, all else is black ahead," continued the old sailor.

"What is that?"

"Everard Bourne, who is a gentleman, well born, accomplished, rich, has offered to marry you. After all, your future is secured, that is one comfort to me. You are engaged to Everard Bourne, Eglantine, and he will not lightly run from his word."

"He would not do that, I know Everard too well," said Eglantine, with a sad shake of the head.

"Well, then, there is not so much harm done after all," remarked Captain Passingham, in a confident tone. "If my enemy has found me out, what matter? Let him do his worst. I agreed that a year should elapse before you wedded Mr. Bourne. I had my reasons, and I don't mind telling you that the principal one was my hope that you would make a better marriage, captive Lord Linton for instance; but that is all over now. Tell Bourne you will have him at once, and that you have my consent. He will jump at the idea. We will move from this part of the world, go abroad if you like, but anyhow get right away from my enemy."

"No, papa, we cannot do that," replied Eglantine, still sadly.

"Not do it? Why not?" he demanded, astonished.

"It is very pretty and nice to contemplate, but it can never be."

"Are you mad, Eglantine?" cried Captain Passingham, astounded.

"No, papa. I may become so, at present I am unhappily quite sane, and I shall write to-day to Mr. Bourne and tell him that circumstances have arisen, over which I have no control, which compel me to inform him that I must break off the engagement existing between us."

"You will do this?"

Captain Passingham's eyes flashed with angry fire, and he leant over his daughter as if he could have done her an injury.

"It is my duty."

"Come, come. This is sheer insanity," said the old sailor, controlling himself by a violent effort. "Let us be calm. I will be. Now talk this matter over quietly like a good girl, will you? What foolish, romantic notion have you got into your head? That is what I want to know. You see everything going to perdition, and you alone can save the ship from splitting upon the rocks and going to pieces. You are the lifeboat, the rocket apparatus, all that can save the ship's company—that is you and myself."

"I am very sorry, papa, that I cannot fall in with your views," Eglantine said. "I too am calm. I am not speaking unreflectingly, nevertheless I tell you that everything is broken off between Everard Bourne and myself from to-day—yes, broken for ever! Just as if we had been twisting ropes with sand when we plighted our troth to each other."

Disappointment, vexation, rage, struggled together for the mastery in the old man's breast, and his agitation was painful to witness.

CHAPTER VIII

It made her nerves unstrung, her manner uncertain, her glance like that of the hunted antelope, when it listens for the eager step which gains nearer and nearer through the awful hush of the night in the jungles.

"HAVE you fully considered the effect of such a suicidal course?" asked Captain Passingham, after a pause of some duration.

"Most fully," replied Eglantine. "Everard's passion for me is now at its height, and I do not believe anything would induce him to break his word to me, but when the first force of this fierce love began to wear off he would think that I had brought a blot into the family. His children would have occasion to blush for their mother, and he could not help secretly despising me for permitting him to marry me under the circumstances which exist."

"You are wrong, wrong—wrong from beginning to end. It is all false pride and mistaken delicacy," returned her father, but he knew her strength of will too well to dream of altering her intention by any argument, however specious and well planned.

Kinging the bell, he ordered a horse to be saddled, determined to ride over to the Wilds without any farther delay. He did not announce his intention to Eglantine, although she surmised whither he

was going. She feared some danger might arise from this meeting, but she was too much perturbed, and suffered so severely from fatigue and the severe mental strain she had undergone, to do more than caution him against any rash ebullition of temper.

"Pooh! pooh!" said the testy old man as he took up his riding-whip. "I can keep my temper as well as most people. Of that I think you have just had a very fair example."

Tears—for the twentieth time that day—tears came into sweet Eglantine's eyes. There seemed to be no end to the troubles and complications in which she was involved. To be spoken harshly to by her doting father was something quite new to her experience; but she comforted herself with the reflection that his love for her was as strong as ever, and only clouded by the great irritation under which he was at present labouring.

Her first care was to write to Everard Bourne.

What an effort that simple matter of filling half a sheet of note paper cost her no one knew but herself.

She accomplished her task at last, however, having in a few simple words told him that the engagement between them must be broken off. Though she did not give him a reason, and requested him to be good enough not to ask for one, as he would thereby spare her feelings, she would feel bound to give him one if he persistently demanded it. She begged him to dismiss from his mind any apprehension that he was directly or indirectly in fault, and in conclusion vowed she would never forget him, though she could not be his.

When this letter was written and despatched to the post the poor girl fairly broke down, and, locking herself in her bedroom, looked fondly at a collection of presents which Everard had given her and watered them with her tears.

In the meantime Captain Passingham rode quickly along the high road which conducted to the Wilds.

"If this fellow, Vigers Morgan, should turn out to be my enemy," he muttered, "I'll see if I can't make some peace with him. The man must be a fiend if he has no forgiveness in him. It is not human nature to go on hating for ever. I'll talk to him—reason with him."

He had fancied the secret of his wife's history a matter buried in his own breast, and had not feared its revival so many years after the occurrence of the events which marked his youth. His enemy knew well how to stab, as he had remarked when he first heard the news which Eglantine brought him.

He had not ridden far before a man also on horseback met him, and exclaimed:

"Good morning, captain. This is a fortunate meeting. I was coming to your house."

It was Mr. Chinner, the lawyer.

"Indeed! On business?" replied Captain Passingham.

"Yes, on business, and of rather an unpleasant nature, too," said Mr. Chinner. "I had to go over to the market town this morning, and there I met Rapp, a member of my own profession. A devoted sharp fellow is Rapp; he knows every move on the board—every one. You can't catch him napping!"

"Well!" cried Captain Passingham, testily. "What has your meeting with Rapp to do with me?"

"Everything, my dear sir; don't be so impatient, I beg of you. You will remember that you bought Medusa Lodge and the farm of three hundred acres belonging to it from Sir Samuel Priestley, the lord of the manor, and the original proprietor of the Wilds. The owner of the Wilds, whoever he may be, is always the lord of the manor. Rapp is the legal adviser of the new comer, Mr. Vigers Morgan, and—"

An impatient exclamation escaped the captain. Was this name to haunt him at every step he took?

"Rapp," continued the garrulous attorney, "has been, at the request of Mr. Morgan, examining into papers, documents, and deeds, and he says he has found a defect in your title."

"A defect in my title!" vociferated Captain Passingham, flushing angrily. "Does the fellow want to rob me of my property for which I honestly paid in hard cash?"

"The phrase is a harsh one, sir," answered Mr. Chinner. "But what he intends to try to do comes to the same thing. It is a deprivation for you of your property. Rapp has given me notice of the service of an ejectment, and he is not the man to balk before he can bite. What he says he'll do he will."

"Eject me from Medusa Lodge! Take away my property, and rob my child of her inheritance! But he can't do it. The law will not support him in such an infamous proceeding," said the captain, aghast.

"Don't trust too much to the law, my dear sir. Law is a ticklish thing. A great lawyer once gave this advice to a man: 'If any one should accost you in the street and say you are wearing his coat, and that he will go to law with you, let him have the

coat, for if you went to law the chances are you would not only lose your coat but your shirt also."

"I am in no humour for this flippery, Mr. Chinner," exclaimed the captain, with some heat. "If an impudent attempt is made to rob me, I will fight the robbers to the last halpenny I have in the world."

"Very good," said Mr. Chinner. "We must, however, look at these things calmly. If there is a flaw in the deed, and your title is bad, which I am afraid is the fact, or Rapp would not say so, you will have to give up possession, hard as it undoubtedly will be for you. I will examine the deeds which I hold for you, and let you have my opinion."

"Thank you; also be good enough to make an abstract of the case, and send it to your agent in town, instructing him to take counsel's opinion."

"It shall be done."

They shook hands, lifted their hats to one another, and cantered on in opposite directions, the captain's hostile and angry feelings intensified tenfold.

His horse was covered with foam when he drew bridle at the Wilds and demanded to see Mr. Morgan of a servant who answered his noisy summons at the door.

"Master is in, sir, but he is very busily engaged writing letters for the post," said the servant.

"I can wait. See to my horse," replied Captain Passingham, striding into the hall.

"Who is it, James?" exclaimed a voice close to him, adding, immediately, "You, Captain Passingham? This is a strange place for us to meet in."

It was Leon Dausert's voice, and the captain recoiled a step or two at meeting him.

"What right have you here, sir?" cried the captain, more furious than ever. "Are you in league with my enemy? Is this the way in which you return my kindness to you—ungrateful boy, that you are?"

To find Leon an inmate of the house belonging to the man who seemed to be compassing his ruin by every effort in his power was an additional blow to him.

"You ought not to ask me a question of that description," answered Leon, in a tone which was contemptuous if it was nothing more. "Did you not order me out of your house? I suppose I have a right to find an asylum somewhere; are you annoyed at finding me in so respectable a one, or did you hope that I should be reduced to apply for parochial relief and make my home in a work-house?"

"You should know that any such hope or expectation is foreign to my nature," said the captain. "You withdrew yourself from my house; had you not done so my protection would have still been extended to you, as it ever has been since I picked you up a waif and a stray on the wide sea."

"I expected to be reminded of that, but you do not humble my pride. I am made of sterner stuff," retorted Leon, bitterly. "If an obligation is harped upon too long by the bestower of it, it is not cancelled?—decidedly, in my opinion."

"Leon, Leon!" exclaimed Captain Passingham, gravely; "this is worse than ingratitude. It betrays a bad spirit. It shows a bad heart. I have been a father to you, my lad, and my only offence was asking you to do something for yourself."

"Because you wished to get rid of a burden."

"Not at all. You should cultivate a spirit of independence, and—"

"Have I not done so?" retorted Leon, savagely.

"Did I not leave you when I saw the spirit you secretly entertained towards me? I don't know that I was such a great expense to you after all; at all events, I have relieved you of the burden of maintaining me now. If you will send me in a bill for what you have done for me—board, lodging, etc.—I will endeavour to repay you shortly."

"You are a bad man, and will come to a bad end," said the captain, with more sorrow than anger now.

"Why? Because I refuse to eat the bread of idleness any longer, and have taken the hint you so plainly gave me? I do not understand you, I frankly confess."

"No matter," the captain said; "I will not bandy words with you. I want to see Mr. Morgan—will you be good enough to tell him I am here?"

"There are servants in the house—order them," rejoined Leon, insolently, as he turned on his heel and walked away.

At this moment a gentleman emerged from a room on the right hand with some letters in his hand and looked curiously at Captain Passingham.

"Did I hear you mention my name?" he said.

"If you are Mr. George Vigers Morgan, you did," answered Captain Passingham, looking at the card Eglantine had given him, and reading the name from it.

"I am at your service. Walk into my study if you please; I will be with you in a moment. I merely wish to give these letters to a servant," replied the gentleman, who was Mr. Morgan himself.

Captain Passingham obeyed a motion of his hand which indicated the study, and entered it. Mr. Morgan was some little time coming back, evidently staying to speak to Leon.

The captain waited with the utmost impatience for his return, and when he appeared exclaimed:

"I presume you are Mr. Morgan's secretary, or some friend of his—when can I see Mr. Morgan himself?"

"I did not tell you in so many words that I was Mr. Morgan," was the reply, "nevertheless, I gave you to understand as much, and such is the fact. My name, sir, is Vigers Morgan, and now, who are you?"

"I can't understand this," stammered Captain Passingham. "You are not Smith Jones, you are a younger man, and not a bit like him. You cannot be my enemy."

Vigers Morgan smiled.

"You are indulging in some pleasantry with me, no doubt," he said. "Why should I be your enemy? I am a stranger to you as you own. I am a new comer in the county, and wish to stand well with every one. Perhaps you have laid some wager that you would come to me in this way—if not, your remarks are inexplicable."

"Yet," continued the captain, without replying to him, and as if pursuing some train of thought. "Vigers Morgan told the Countess of Carysmade that my daughter was illegitimate. Vigers Morgan has instructed Mr. Rapp to serve me with a notice of ejectment, and Morgan again has given shelter to Leon, who insults and laughs at me."

"Allow me to explain," said Mr. Morgan, who heard these words. "To Lady Carysmade I merely repeated a little gossip about Miss Passingham which I had heard somewhere, I don't know where exactly. It was said quite innocently. As to Rapp, I merely gave him general instructions to examine deeds and protect my interests. Thirdly, Mr. Leon Dausert sought my hospitality after being ejected by you, and I gave it him. I was in want of a private secretary, and he has accepted the post."

"I demand that you turn him out, sir," exclaimed the captain. "It is his duty to come back to me." "As you are not his parent you cannot claim any right to dictate to him; therefore I must respectfully decline to comply with your request," was the calm reply.

"You are in league with him against me. Very well, we must fight this out to the bitter end," said Captain Passingham, putting on his hat. "One word before you go, Captain Passingham," exclaimed Mr. Morgan. "Do not carry away with you the absurd idea that I entertain any hostility towards you. Why should I? Come here as often as you like. Let us be on friendly terms. I should appreciate your friendship. I should indeed."

He extended his hand, which the captain refused to grasp.

"No!" he said, sullenly. "You have done me grievous wrong. There is some mystery in all this. I cannot fathom it yet. I must have time to think."

"May I ask why you confounded me with a man named Smith Jones? Am I likely to have had aliases?" inquired Vigers Morgan.

"Ask Leon, your new secretary. He knows the story, and should have told it to you before, so that you might both make money at my expense. Good day to you. My horse is at the door. I'll go home."

"A very good day," said Mr. Morgan, ringing the bell for a servant to show his visitor out, and adding, "How regrettable this heat is. Poor old man. Why should he be so excitable?"

Captain Passingham placed his hand to his forehead as if he felt his brain reel. He mounted his horse with difficulty, but the air, which was now cooler, refreshed him, and he regained strength as he progressed on his journey.

When he reached home Eglantine was waiting to receive him. She had stifled her own grief, and determined to do her duty, however great her own sufferings might be. Her eyes were still red, and her face was pale. Captain Passingham was not so wild and haggard as he had been when he parted from her a few hours before, though he was sad and anxious. She threw her arms round his neck and kissed him, and he returned her caress tenderly, saying:

"My dear, good girl, prop and consolation of my age, what should I do without you? The storms are gathering around our heads, and we shall require all our strength and self-confidence to surmount them."

"We must trust in Heaven, dear papa," replied Eglantine. "But tell me what it is that disquiets you."

"I have much to trouble me," he replied, telling her how he was threatened with ejectment, and how Leon persisted in his rebellious conduct, adding:

"I fancied that Mr. Morgan, who is either purposely or accidentally causing me all this mischief, was my old enemy Smith Jones, but that I find is not the case. Years would have altered the strange sailor who vowed to be revenged upon me, yet I should know him again. I cannot make it all out. I am sadly puzzled."

"We must be calm under our difficulties," said Eglantine, acting the part of a comforter. "Dismiss from your mind, first of all, this idea respecting your enemy."

"I cannot."

"He would not, even if alive, think of his oath after the lapse of all these years. Mr. Morgan cannot do us much harm, if he has the inclination, which I doubt. The law will protect you. I will do all in my power to sustain and support you, except—she hung down her head and blushed—"except marry Mr. Bourne. I have written to him to break off our engagement for the reasons I have told you. It cost me a struggle, but I am brave now it is over."

And she choked back a sob.

"Well, well," said the captain, "I must not force you to do what you think wrong. I cannot see any valid objection to your marriage with Everard, but you know best. I wish my spirit was not so stubborn, and that I could say with your resignation, 'Heaven's will be done!'"

"It will come to you, dear papa, if you pray for it," she replied, looking up at him with a sublime faith. "We shall be happy again soon, when our trouble is over. Every one has some trouble. We are not exceptions to the general rule."

"If I could only get rid of this vague, haunting fear that my enemy is on my track, I should be happy," answered Captain Passingham; "but it is a fixed idea with me that the time has come for him to keep his vow. Nothing can move this impression. If you had only seen him, my darling, on the deck of the ship when he took his fearful oath you would never have forgotten it, and you would believe with me that the man meant what he said. It was not the idle speech of an exasperated man, smarting with the pain of an ignominious and disgraceful punishment which he didn't think he deserved. He was no common man either. His every word and movement bespoke him a gentleman, though he sailed under my orders as a common seaman. I caught him once reading Horace in the original, and I found a Homer in his chest, which contained marginal notes in his handwriting, that showed an extraordinary familiarity with Greek literature. I repeat he was no common man, and I fear him, though all these years have elapsed since he deserted from the ship, and he has done nothing in them."

"I should treat this as a delusion," answered Eglantine. "See Doctor Martin, dear papa, and ask him if I am not right. Cannot we go away from here? Change of air will do you good."

"I will see Martin, but I cannot leave here. They threaten to deprive me of my property. I must protect my own interests. I will not be driven away," he answered, pettishly.

Eglantine did not urge him farther. The conversation they had held together had enabled them in some measure to understand their position.

Dinner was soon announced, and in the evening they sat down to play at chess. The captain would have fallen an easy prey to his daughter through his preoccupation had not she been equally careless. About tea time Doctor Martin dropped in as if by accident. In reality he had received a note from Eglantine requesting his presence, as she wished him to talk to her father, who was unwell, and to do so without letting him know he had an object in doing so.

"This is kind of you," cried the captain. "I thought every one had deserted me. I am a man of troubles, doctor, like Job of old, bowed down and afflicted."

"Indeed? Sorry to hear that. What is the matter with you?" asked Doctor Martin, sitting down and taking the cup of tea and slice of thin bread and butter which Eglantine offered him.

"The mind, doctor; that's where the evil lies."

"Ah, the mind is always more difficult to cure than the body."

Eglantine sought a pretext to retire. It was then half-past nine, and she was so tired and worn-out that if they could excuse her, she said, she should so like to go to bed early. It would do her good she thought. So she shook hands with them both, and left her father alone with the doctor.

"A game at chess?" said Doctor Martin, pointing to the men which still lay on the table.

"Not to-night, doctor, if you will let me off; I can't play. I tried it with Tiny just now and it was no good. What do you say to pipes and grog, and we can have a chat?" replied Captain Passingham.

"With all my heart."

The pipes were brought in as well as spirits, and, after smoking in silence for some time, the captain exclaimed:

"Do you believe in delusions, doctor?"

"Most certainly I do," was the answer.

"May a man have a delusion and be sane on all other points?"

"Decidedly."

"You recollect my talking about a man who vowed to be revenged on me the other night? Very well.

I think that man is at work. Hear my reasons for telling you so, then say if I am deluding myself or not. Give me your candid opinion; you won't hurt my feelings."

The captain related what had happened, the injury done to his daughter at the Countess of Carymedo's, the threatened ejection, and the flight of Leon and subsequent domiciliation at the Wilds.

"I am not so sure about the delusion," said the doctor, slowly, and after a pause. "There may be more in this than a casual observer would think of at the first blush."

The captain's face fell.

"Is that a letter, half in, half out of your pocket?" asked the doctor, perceiving something.

"An undirected envelope apparently," replied the captain, looking at it, "and somewhat crumpled. It is nothing. I remember when I was in Morgan's study at the Wilds to-day seizing something in my passion with my right hand and letting my fist close over it. I must have put it in my pocket."

As he spoke he carelessly glanced over its contents.

His countenance changed. He drew his breath with difficulty as he proceeded, and, trembling like a leaf, he handed to the doctor a sheet of paper he had drawn from the envelope.

"Read, read!" he cried. "It is no delusion. I am a doomed man. I am in the toils of a mighty conspiracy. Heaven help me, for I am undone—I and my child!"

Wondering at his sudden excitement, Doctor Martin took the paper, and, adjusting his spectacles with provoking precision and regularity, began to read it.

In the meantime Captain Passingham's distress was pitiable to witness.

(To be continued.)

BARBARA.

THE night was wild with horror. Overhead swept the clouds, and from the sea came a hollow, inarticulate, but deafening roar. The wind shrieked in boisterous glee, and the rain fell in drenching torrents.

Weirdly beautiful as the ideal creation of some old master, with the face and figure of an Eastern sultana—a strange, intense light burning in her stormy eyes—was Barbara Brundenel as she gazed seaward from a window of Brundenel House fascinated by the grandeur of the storm that raged without.

By her side stood Dr. Eustace Brundenel, her cousin.

Every now and then vivid sheets of lightning flame lighted up the heavens.

Looking up into her cousin's face, Barbara distinguished an expression of extreme anxiety.

"Eustace, what troubles you? Is there any one in danger?" she whispered.

"Yes. Old Betteridge but now sighted a small vessel—a yacht apparently—and this is such a treacherous coast that a calamity seems inevitable."

Presently there came a more vivid flash than any that had preceded it. Eustace jumped to his feet with a cry of horror.

"What is it?" eagerly demanded Barbara.

"What did you see?"

"The yacht is on the bar!"

Snatching his dreadnought from its peg, and catching up a lantern that lay near by, Brundenel tore from the house, followed almost immediately by the impulsive Barbara, who had been seized with a determination to perform a part in the perilous work of attempted rescue.

When Brundenel arrived on the beach, with the assistance of some sturdy fishermen who were collected there, conferring as to the course to be pursued, the life-boat was speedily launched. But no amount of persuasion could induce Barbara to relinquish her purpose of accompanying the crew.

The oars dipped into the crisp foam, and the boat carried its occupants up great black horrors of waves, and down into whirling hollows with swift alternation.

Presently the yacht loomed up before them, the bristling jaws of the reefs holding her fast, and the vivid lightning playing about her bows. Half a dozen human figures could be seen clinging frantically to the ropes.

Nearer and nearer the rescuers drew, until at last they were close to the wreck. The frightened men tumbled eagerly into the boat, until there was left only a solitary figure on the deck of the yacht.

He did not stir or seem to notice them until Brundenel shouted to him:

"For Heaven's sake, man, come down. You'll be drowned."

"Push off!" was the reply. "I am well enough here."

At that instant the darkness was scattered by a vivid glare of light. The strange man's face became distinctly visible for a short space—a dark,

passionate face, tinted rich and clear and warm, with a dash of gold on the long brown moustache and rippling faxen hair, and a dreamy, languid light in the blue, velvety eyes.

"Good heavens!" Brundenel exclaimed, sharply.

"It is Guy Thornton!"

"Brundenel!" was the surprised response. "Life is worth saving since it is saved by you, dear friend."

They had been travelling companions a year before, and a warm affection between them had been the result.

The two clasped hands, then Guy, casting a long, earnest, yet tenderly sad gaze into the face of Barbara, sank passively into a seat in the boat, and scarcely stirred again till the perilous passage back to the shore was accomplished.

There was a merry party in Brundenel House at breakfast the following morning. The storm had swept past while the darkness lasted, and day had dawned fair as a dream of heaven.

Thornton had quite recovered from any exhaustion of the previous evening. His flashing blonde beauty seemed something marvellous in the clear light of the beautiful morning, and his melodious voice and extraordinary power of fascination soon cast a spell over every one by whom he was surrounded. So paramount was this feeling that when in the course of the day he announced to his friend his intention of bidding adieu and going back to London without further delay, Brundenel stared at him and rejoined:

"You shall do nothing of the sort. I cannot part with you so soon. The sea gave you up to me, and I claim you. Don't think of going for some weeks to come. I shall really feel hurt if you do."

"Friends are awaiting me there."

"Let them wait."

But Thornton still seemed resolute.

"You can send back word by the men who were with you in the yacht," Brundenel resumed.

Barbara looked up at their guest.

"Stay!" she whispered.

He seemed strangely moved—strangely averse to remaining. At that whispered word from the girl even his lips lost their colour. But he leaned forward suddenly until his bronzed beard touched her hair.

"I am your slave," he said.

Afterwards there were merry times at Brundenel House. Thornton, with his marvellous spirits and rare moods, seemed to fascinate everybody.

Brundenel began to notice the change in his cousin at last.

"Barbara," he said to her one day, "have a care. You are falling in love with this handsome stranger."

"Not so," she answered, flushing hotly. "He is glorious, he is superb, and I admire him. That is all."

"Indeed!"

"Don't be exasperating, Eustace."

"I only wished to warn you. I wouldn't like you to fall in love with Thornton."

"Why?"

"Because I'm half in love with you myself, and may ask you to marry me some day."

She laughed.

"Foolish boy. You'd better not."

There the conversation ended.

They were all out on one of the islands that dotted the harbour one perfect day full of hazy warmth and sunshine. Mrs. Grimshaw, the housekeeper, was there to play propriety.

Barbara and Thornton had made the passage in a stanch green and white wherry, while Brundenel and Mrs. Grimshaw followed in their wake with a smaller boat.

It was glorious—wandering idly along the pebbly beach, or sauntering among the rocks with the midsommer sun dropping its splendour about them, the hazy air heavy with sweets, the sea one vast purple plain speckled with silver spots.

Barbara wandered a little apart from the rest, presently, and stood on the edge of the cliff, looking seaward. Suddenly there was a cry. Thornton looked up from the mimic castle of shells he was rearing. In the place where the girl had stood a moment since there was only a gleam of sky and of water.

"Good heavens!" he ejaculated, starting up.

With a bound he had reached the edge of the cliff, and was leaning over the dizzy height. There, scarcely twenty feet below him, was Barbara, lying still as a dead woman on a shelving rock. She had caught at some bushes in falling, and had barely managed to crawl to that place of temporary security.

Even as Thornton looked down on her he could see an imploring expression on her white, frightened face.

"Fear nothing," he shouted down to her. "I will save you."

He dropped over the dizzy verge, clinging to the sharp, jagged points of the rock. Downward he

made his slow and tedious way. He reached her side, and caught her up in his brawny arms.

"My darling!" he muttered, with white lips.

"Guy, oh, Guy! I am so glad!" And she flung her arms round his neck and clung there convulsively.

Her words seemed like a revelation. His face grew ghastly in its despairing anguish. He put her from him for a single instant.

"I had never dreamed of this," he moaned.

Then he turned suddenly, as if not daring to trust himself farther, snatched the scarf from his neck and knotted it about her waist.

"It would be easy—so easy—to plunge into the boiling flood below," he cried, suddenly. "Is life so very dear to you, Barbara?"

For answer she flung up her hands with a frightened look. The lines about his mouth deepened and hardened as he saw the gesture.

"Cling fast to me," he whispered, huskily. "I doubt, if you have chosen wisely. Let Heaven be the judge."

His arms were round her again. Slowly and with difficulty he made his way up the almost naked face of the rock, thus burdened—slowly and with difficulty, and on the edge of the precipice he reeled and felt himself dragged upon solid ground by the strong arm of Brundenel.

"My faith," panted the latter. "But you two have had a narrow escape of it. My head swims only to think of the risk you ran."

"Wonderful!" sobbed Mrs. Grimshaw.

Thornton did not speak. For a minute or two he was like one from whom all life and strength had been taken. Then he looked at Barbara. Like himself she was deathly pale.

There were half-a-dozen hysterical ejaculations on the part of Brundenel and Mrs. Grimshaw, then a strange quiet fell, and Thornton heard footsteps retreating. Looking up a second time, he saw that he and Barbara were alone.

His face became strangely convulsed. He struggled with himself for a moment, then put out both his arms.

"Barbara," he whispered.

She crept nearer by a step or two, then drew back again.

"What is it?" she cried. "You frighten me, Guy. I cannot understand you."

His hands dropped listlessly to his side.

"You are right to shrink from me," he groaned. "Away, away! Follow Mrs. Grimshaw. You are not safe here with me."

"Why not?" she ventured.

"Barbara, I am a villain."

Her stormy eyes dilated.

"A villain!" she repeated, in slow, incredulous tones.

"Yes." He flung himself on the grass at her feet. "Forgive me, if you can, for the wrong I have done you. I can never forgive myself."

"Guy, Guy!"

"You love me," he went on, fiercely. "I know it now, though I've been blind up to this day. You love me, and you are dearer to me than life or my hope of heaven."

Hot blushes swept over her cheeks. She went nearer to him and sought to slip her hand into his, but he pushed it rudely away.

"Barbara, hear me!" he cried, in a voice that seemed not his own. "Learn the full depth of my treachery. The first morning after I came here I told Eustace that a friend was waiting for me in London. Shall I tell you something of that friend?"

"Yes."

"It was my wife of whom I spoke."

Barbara recoiled as from a blow. The colour forsok her face, leaving it marble-like in its pallor once again. She put out her hands involuntarily, like one groping in the dark.

There was a long silence. Barbara rallied at last. "Have you anything farther to say to me?" she asked, in a strange, icy tone of voice.

"Yes, yes. I have been wrong, wicked. But, believe me, I never thought of anything like this. I saw the danger of my loving you, but I never thought—"

"Hush!" she said, holding up her hand.

"Will you not forgive me? Heaven knows that I struggled against temptation. I knew from the first that the spell of your presence would be irresistible. I sought to break away, to fly before it was too late—"

"And we would not let you go. Yes, I know all that," she said, wearily.

"Will you not forgive the great wrong I have done you?"

"Yes, I forgive it."

Thornton leaned towards her.

"Listen," he cried. "You must hear my story. At twenty, to save my father from ruin and the shame of an exposure, I married a woman I hated. She was ten years older than myself, and ugly; yet I married her. A sad mistake, was it not? But I felt that my father must be saved at any cost."

Here he paused a moment to wipe the moisture from his brow.

"That was five years ago, Barbara. Since then I have been like an Ishmaelite on the earth. I could not look on the face of the woman who was my wife for many consecutive days without going mad. Therefore have I wandered up and down the earth. Death would have been a welcome release from the bonds that galled me, but death does not take kindly to those who court him. Now you know why I lingered till the last on the wreck that fearful night. It seemed as if my hour had come. Would to Heaven I had died then and there."

Barbara stood with her face turned from him when he ceased speaking. A statue could not have been more motionless.

"Pity me, Barbara," he cried, touching her hand gently, "I am so miserable."

"I do pity you."

She turned and walked swiftly towards the beach. At first her eyes were so blinded that she saw nothing—not even the way in which she was going. But when she reached the landing-place she discovered that the smaller of the two boats was not there.

A footstep came striding up behind her just as she made this discovery.

"You must go back with me in the wherry," said Thornton's voice just behind her.

"Is there no other way?"

"None."

It was too true. Brundenel and Mrs. Grimshaw had deserted them, and were already far on the homeward route.

Barbara stood irresolute for a minute.

"Come," she said, then, in a sharp, cold voice, "let us go at once. I am weary."

They stepped into the wherry, and Thornton caught up the oars. Barbara sat by herself in the prow, her passionate, slumberous eyes fixed on the crested waves over which they glided. Not a word was said.

At last the keel grated on the sand at the base of the headland. Barbara sprang out.

Thornton gave her a look that was eloquent with despair.

"Am I to come no more to Brundenel House?" he said.

"Never again," she answered.

Then she darted off.

Up the slippery path she climbed, like one fleeing from doom.

It was Brundenel who opened the door on her arrival at the house.

"Where is Thornton?" he cried, teasingly. "Mrs. Grimshaw and I saw what was coming, and wisely took ourselves off. Am I to congratulate either of you?"

"No."

He looked at her sharply.

"What's happened? Surely you have not refused him?"

Then he said no more. Something in her face awed, frightened him. In silence he led her to the sofa, and in silence went away, leaving her there alone.

At the end of an hour he came back again.

"Something terrible has happened," he said, gravely. "You are more composed now. Tell me all."

She did tell him, sitting there like some figure carved in stone. When the end of the recital was reached Brundenel started up, his hands clenched, his face pale with passion.

"Thornton is a villain," he said, between his teeth.

"No, no!" She flung her arms wildly round his neck, her statue-like self-control giving way for the moment. "You do not comprehend his temptation," she cried. "Be just, Eustace. Pity him."

"And you, Barbara?"

"Don't mind me. Only promise one thing: that you will have no quarrel with this man."

"I promise," he replied, sullenly.

He strode several times up and down the room. At last he came back again and halted by the girl's side.

"I always liked Thornton," he said. "But he must come here no more. I cannot take his hand after this. And, Barbara, if it will be easier for you to face the world with the brotherly sort of love I can give you—"

"Hush! Never speak of that again, Eustace."

"But I am really fond of you—fonder than I can ever be of any other woman. I was willing to give you up to Thornton though—while I thought him worthy of you. But that is all over."

"Hush!" she said again, and crept away.

After that two or three wretched days slipped by, then Thornton came over just at dusk one night, a haggard, weary man, the ghost of his former self. Brundenel met him at the door.

"Your business here?" he said, curtly.

Thornton put out a hand that shook like an aspen in the wind.

"Barbara has told you," he murmured. "I'm glad you know what a villain I am. But will you not take my hand just once for the sake of the old friendship?"

"Heaven help you! Why are you here?"

Brundenel spoke in a softer tone, and his lips trembled.

"I wanted to hear from her—to see her just for one minute, perhaps."

"No, no. It must not be. Don't come again. Good-bye. You will go back to your wife?"

"Yes."

"Do so."

The two shook hands, and parted.

Brundenel started to go in. He found Barbara standing like a ghost just within the door. A single glance into her face told him that she must have heard all.

He went up to her and kissed her.

"Shall I never see him again?" she gasped.

"Never," Brundenel answered; and he realized now, as he had not done before, how madly this girl loved his friend.

But Barbara did see Thornton again.

It was three days later. She was out on the rocks at the hour of twilight. She stood near the verge of the precipice, watching the restless tide as it came tumbling in, and wondering in a listless sort of way how one felt who was going mad. Suddenly a footstep sounded beside her.

"Barbara!" cried a rapid, eager voice, and she felt herself drawn to a wildly beating heart.

"Oh, Guy, Guy!"

She lay in his arms without the power of motion or resistance. For a few blissful seconds she forgot everything save the frantic joy of his presence. Then she suddenly pushed him from her.

"Let me go!" she moaned.

"I cannot. Ah, how I love you! Look at me!" And he suddenly drew back, turning his worn face full upon her. "See how I have suffered. I thought I should never see you again. This struggle is terrible! It is killing me."

She put up two weak, trembling hands.

"For the love of Heaven, leave me!"

"I will not!" he cried, fiercely. "You are my sun, my life! I should droop and die without you. Have mercy, Barbara!"

"What would you have me do?" she asked, with blanched lips.

"Fly with me, darling! I love you above honour and friends and country. I love you better than life. Just so madly ought you to love me. You do love me—you cannot deny that!"

She stood like a statue. He fell at her feet, lifting up his handsome, convulsed face in prayerful entreaty.

"Fly with me," he repeated. "Let us leave this place. Afar from here we can be happy together. We will forget that we ever knew any other life. Come, come!"

She still was dumb.

"Speak, Barbara, speak to me. Tell me that you will come with me. Tell me that you will be my guiding angel in this world. I cannot go back to the woman whom I abhor. I will not! Oh, pity me, darling!"

"Heaven forgive you," she said, at last, in a broken voice. "You are sorely tempted. Heaven forgive you, and strengthen me, for I will never, never go with you."

He stared up at her half-incredulously for an instant. Then a sudden revulsion of feeling came over him. He buried his face in his hands, while strong convulsions shook his frame.

"I was mad," he moaned, staggering to his feet at last, "mad with misery and pain. Forgive me, darling. I know you are right. You have saved us both. Good-bye. Heaven bless and keep you."

He strained her to his heart once again; then slowly released her and strode away, not trusting himself to take a single backward glance.

Barbara stood where he had left her, with both hands clasped over her heart. Presently a woman's figure rose up from the rocks to the left, and came gliding towards her. It was Mrs. Thornton!

"Ha! ha!" shrieked the maddened woman, with a shrill laugh. "Vile temptress, you've kept your last appointment with that man! I have risen from a sick bed to watch you both. And now your life shall pay the forfeit of your guilty love."

She came rushing onward like some winged fury, her reckless feet dashing close to the verge of the precipice, or skimming carelessly over the jagged rocks. Nearer, nearer she came—her wild hair swept backward from her thin, tigerish face, her eyes glowing.

Barbara watched her as if spell-bound, bereft of all power to fly. Nearer and nearer came the frantic woman. Of a sudden, when scarcely half-a-dozen yards away, she flung up both arms wild, uttered a piercing shriek, and dropped from sight.

Her foot had slipped, and she had fallen over the precipice upon the bristling rocks a hundred feet below.

Was it Heaven's vengeance on the would-be murderers?

When the solemn funeral rite was over Thornton and Barbara met for a few moments in the presence of Brundenel, merely to say good-bye to each other.

Then Thornton fell into his old habit of roving. Barbara heard no word from him for a twelve-month.

When the year was ended, one beautiful September night, he again made his appearance at Brundenel House, grave and older looking, but more fascinating than ever.

"We have both suffered, both been severely tried," he said. "But I love you to-day more fondly than ever before, and my love has been purified; the lesson has humbled me. Can you forget and forgive the past and trust your future to my keeping?"

Who does not guess her answer? She loved him, and love, like charity, covers a multitude of sins.

Brundenel was easily reconciled to the course events had taken. Indeed, he had suspected how it would end from the first. He still lives with Barbara and Thornton in that house on the headlands, a warm friend to them both. R. W.

ZOOLOGICAL CURIOSITY.—A curious fact in zoology has lately come to light. It appears that the ants in Panama are not merely mining engineers, they build tubular bridges. A corresponding member of the Glasgow Natural History Society, who has lately been in that country, describes the curious covered ways constructed by these ingenious insects. In tracing one of these covered ways he found it led over a pretty wide fracture in the rocks, and was carried across in the air in the form of a tubular bridge of half an inch in diameter. It was the scene of busy traffic. There was nearly a foot of unsupported tube from one edge of the cliff to the other. Fancy the Monai bridge being only the result of transmitted insects after all.

THE NEW ACT ON DOGS.—The Act to provide farther protection against dogs has just been printed. Stray dogs may be detained and sold or destroyed. Dangerous dogs may be destroyed. The local authorities may, if a mad dog, or a dog suspected of being mad, is found within their jurisdiction, make, and, when made, vary or revoke, an order placing such restrictions as they think expedient on all dogs not being under the control of any person during such period as may be prescribed in such order throughout the whole of their jurisdiction, or such part thereof as may be prescribed in such order. Penalties are to be imposed, and the provisions contained in the Act as to the detention and sale or destruction of dogs found straying on the highway shall apply to dogs found at large in contravention of an order made. The statute is to be cited as "The Dog Act, 1871."

CROSSING THE ATLANTIC ON A RAFT.—Captain John Meiks, who, in 1807, crossed the Atlantic on a life-raft, is preparing for another voyage to Europe on a smaller raft of similar construction. The raft is composed of inflated indiarubber tubes, which, when not filled with air, fold up in a comparatively small compass, but when inflated will carry all the persons that can crowd on it. The raft on which Captain Meiks performed his last voyage was 25 feet long by 18 feet wide. He then had two men with him. A canvas tent was erected on the raft, and the three crossed the Atlantic, arriving safely in England in forty days. Captain Meiks is now having another life-raft made, 15 feet long and 12 feet wide, on which he intends going to Europe, accompanied only by a boy. He will be ready to start about the middle of August, and will take with him sixty days' provisions. He intends taking the direct steamers' track, and is confident of success.

ANECDOTE OF CHARLES X.—The following touching anecdote of the unfortunate Charles X. has not appeared in print, but well deserves to be saved from oblivion. After residing in honourable exile at Holyrood Palace, in Edinburgh, for about two years, and endearing himself to all around him by his amiable, unostentatious manners and profuse charities to the poor, the venerable monarch quitted Edinburgh with great regret to seek another place of refuge in his last years of life and misfortune. It is generally understood that he was in a manner forced away by the Government. Certain it is that he had become greatly attached to Holyrood, and he left it with great sorrow and reluctance. A friend of mine paid a visit to Holyrood a few years after the royal departure, and learned from the old house-keeper that the day before the king left the palace, which he did on September 17th, 1832, she saw him from a small window alone in the flower-garden, which he had himself cultivated with great delight. He was gathering seeds of various flowers, and folding them up in little square papers which he had prepared. The tears were running down his aged

cheeks as he collected these simple memorials of his happy residence in Holyrood, to take with him to sow in his new place of exile at Goritz, where perhaps they flourished long after his royal hand could tend them, for he died there, only four years afterwards, November 6, 1836.

SIGNS AND PASSWORDS OF THE KU-KLUX.—A renegade member of the dreaded "Ku-Klux Klan" has confessed himself to the Louisville (Kentucky) authorities, and thereby saved his neck—for a time. In his confession he makes some revelations with reference to the "symbolic signs and passwords" of that throat-cutting, highway-robbing body. To recognize "a brother," he said, "we raise the hat with the right hand, pull the brim down over the right eye. The answer is the same with the left hand. Both then draw their left hands across their mouths, as if washing, and strike their breasts with their right. The grips are made by grasping hands in the usual manner, with the thumb pressing slightly between the other's thumb and forefinger, saying, 'I am all right; how are you?' He answers, 'I am all right.' I reply, 'How may I know you are all right?' He answers, 'By word or letter.' I ask, 'Which do you prefer?' He may call for either. If he asks for a letter, I tell him 'Spell.' He says, 'S'; I say, 'L'; he says, 'A'; I say, 'P'; he says, 'U'; I say, 'P'; he says spelling out, 'Slap up,' which is the text word of the Order. I get into difficulty, and am overpowered, and desire to know if any brother is present. I look arms across my breast, as if cold, saying, 'I wish I knew if any of St. Mary's children were about.' If any brother is about he will come to my aid. If my opponent be a member of the band he will immediately desist. When travelling at night, on meeting a person and desiring to know if he is a brother, I say, 'Halt!' and give a loud slap with my hand on my thigh. He answers with two slaps. When it is desired by the captain to call a meeting he sends the marshal to notify each member. The place of meeting is always in some dense wood, without fire or light of any kind."

RUTH AND EDITH; OR, 'NEATH FOREST SHADES.

CHAPTER IV.

THE rest of the party were as eager as Dick to go on, so they at once set off upon the trail, he leading the van as before. From this point the way was more difficult, and they could not advance so rapidly as they had done. The forest was more dense, and the thick foliage almost completely shut out the light of the stars.

Besides, there were fallen trees and huge boulders that thrust themselves in the way, over which in the darkness it was difficult to climb. The trail, too, was more indistinguishable now than it had been, and the greatest caution was necessary to prevent the little party straying from it.

For a time the ranger could not imagine why it was that the renegade had not avoided this spot, which was so difficult to pass through. He knew the country well, and was aware that upon either side good travelling might have been found.

Dick determined at last that the renegade must have chosen this way for some purpose of his own, and this thought served to put him on his guard more than he otherwise would have been. He conjectured that the red-skins could not be far away and that any minute might bring them up with them.

A little farther onward the trail led in between two rocky hills, which rose abruptly on either side. They were little more than rocky ledges or huge boulders piled one upon the other, upon which here and there was a stunted tree, that drew but a scanty subsistence from the soil. The valley between them was very narrow, nowhere more than a dozen rods in width, and in most places not half of that.

No sooner had our friends entered this spot than the same thought instantly suggested itself to each. A better place there could not be for an Indian ambush; and doubtless the renegade had selected it for its suitability for that purpose.

He might have thought that the settlers would follow them for the purpose of avenging the death of the Haven family and rescuing the captives. If these thoughts were in his mind he had selected this spot for a camping-ground, and he was now but a short distance away. The savage whom they had just disposed of might have been one whom he had left at the entrance of the valley to give the alarm in case they should be pursued.

Therefore it was necessary to be cautious in the extreme, and to guard as best they could against surprise. Not a sound broke the stillness about them. All was as silent as the grave. Each one of the party was well versed in woodcraft, and they all knew how much depended upon their caution. The

snapping of a twig or the dislodgement of a stone might be the means of endangering their lives as well as defeating their main purpose. Therefore they used every means in their power to guard against betraying their presence to the enemy in case he was near.

Five, ten minutes had passed since they had entered the valley, yet they had seen nothing that would indicate the presence of those they were in pursuit. Then Dick, as he passed round a large boulder that lay directly in the trail, uttered a low, warning cry. In a moment each stood motionless in his place.

The hasty sound he had made sent a thrill through each, for they felt sure that it was an announcement that the red-skins were close at hand. In this they were not disappointed. Simon, who chanced to be next to him, saw at the same moment the glimmer of a light ahead.

The deep-toned voice of the Wool-Giant thrilled through them as he said, in a loud whisper:

"Look, boys, there is the camp-fire of the renegade and his red-skins. We have them now, and let us work for vengeance."

Each one crowded up to him and saw the glimmer of the light rising and falling through the trees.

Philip and Simon thought of the maidens whom they were now so near, and their hearts gave a great bound of hope that ere long they could press them in their arms and assure them of their safety.

For the space of a minute neither stirred from his place or gave utterance to a sound. Then Dick again broke the silence.

"Keep still where you are, boys," he said. "I'm going to get a glimpse of what they're doing. Don't stir from this spot or make a bit of noise unless you're obliged to; but if anything runs again you, why, fight like wildcats, that's all. I won't be gone a great while if nothing happens to me; but if I don't come back you all know what to do. Clean out the red-skins and that white traitor, or die. If you don't I'll haunt you all the rest of your lives."

"Faith, and a fine ghost it is that you would be after making," exclaimed the Irishman, in a loud whisper. "You would scare the hair right off the head of the biggest boxer in swate Ireland."

Dick made no reply to this pleasantry on the part of the Irishman. Neither did he utter another word by way of advice or direction. With a light footstep and a stealthy motion he moved away from the spot, and was soon lost to them in the gloom.

There was nothing now that remained for them to do but to keep quiet where they were, and to await his return, unless it was to see that they were not surprised by the savages who might be moving about in the valley. Therefore they stirred neither hand nor foot, but stood counting the seconds as they passed.

All thought that they had never known them to go so slowly before. One after another went by, and at last ten minutes had passed since the ranger had left them. They began to be impatient for his return.

Almost endless seemed the next five minutes, still there was no sign of his coming. Surely he ought to have reached the camp-fire, accomplished his errand, and been back by this time. No sound came from the direction he had taken to indicate that harm had come to him. Ten minutes more, still there was no sign of his coming. What could it mean?

A half-hour had now elapsed since he had left them. Was it their duty to await his coming longer? Had they not stood idle too long already?

These questions were asked of each other in whispers. Philip and Simon were for going forward at once. So was the Irishman. But Rube Granger counselled a still longer delay.

"Dick ain't a man to fall into a trap easily," he said. "He keeps both eyes open and his ears as well. I don't believe that Sam Green and all his red-skins can outwit him. Let's be quiet a little longer, then if we see nothing of him we'll try and find out what's the matter."

"And, faith, ye would be after seeing his ghost come here, wouldn't ye?" muttered the Irishman, who was so eager to go on that he couldn't keep still.

Rube made no reply. He was anxious to avoid doing anything in a hurry, and so frustrate their designs. There was too much at stake to risk a false move, if they knew how to prevent it. The prolonged absence of Dick worried him as much as it did any of them, but he had resolved to be patient.

At last he himself could stand this suspense no longer. He felt that farther delay would do them no good, and that it was best that they should endeavour to ascertain what had become of the ranger. Should he not be found, it was their duty to undertake the task before them as they would have done with his assistance.

A few words now passed between them, then they silently crept onward.

The lights before them, which at first had shone so brightly, had now faded away to a mere glimmer, yet it served to guide them onward, and slowly they moved towards it.

Several times they stopped and listened intently, but all was quiet. Nearer and nearer they crept, and at last they were close to the camp-fire.

They could see the forms of the savages sitting about it, and from their appearance they judged that some of them at least were in a deep sleep. One or two, as was ever the custom of the savages when on the war-path, were acting as sentinels over the camp.

Nearer and nearer the little party crept, not satisfied with what they had seen. They had not yet got a glimpse of the captives, neither had they of the renegade, unless he was disguised as an Indian, as was not to be distinguished from his followers.

Closer and still closer they crept, the heart of each beating so loudly that he feared it would betray them. At last they stood upon the very verge of the camp—so close to one of the red-skins standing guard that Rube could almost have touched him with the muzzle of his rifle. Eagerly they scanned all before them; but neither the renegade nor the sisters were to be seen.

CHAPTER V.

WHEN Dick left his companions behind him it was, as the reader already knows, his intention to return to them in a few minutes at the farthest, providing no harm came to him.

To pass over the ground that lay between them and the spot where the light of the camp-fire shone out would take but a few moments, and still less would be required to take in the situation of the enemy. Therefore, as we have said, he expected to rejoin his companions in a very short time.

When he parted from them he moved forward with extreme caution, for he knew not but that an enemy might confront him at any moment. For such a contingency he held himself in readiness at every step, determined to do battle for his life and for the cause in which he was engaged.

Little chance would a savage have had he suddenly presented himself and endeavored to prevent his advance. Could Dick but have laid his hands upon him he would have crushed him to the earth. As he crept not the slightest sound marked his progress. Not so much as a twig snapped or a leaf rustled beneath his feet. To one unacquainted with woodcraft it would seem almost miraculous how he could move so lightly. But such skill is acquired only after long years of practice and close attention.

As he approached the camp-fire his caution was redoubled. A single misstep now might precipitate them all upon him and ruin everything.

A few paces more and he reached a position so close to the fire that he could command a view of its entire surroundings.

There was something like a score of savages lying and standing about it. But, strain his eyes as he would, he could get no glimpse of a white man.

The renegade was not there, unless he was so disguised as to prevent recognition. Neither could Dick see aught of the captives. What could have become of them? They must be somewhere near at hand, and he felt sure they were lying somewhere in the shadows and his gaze had escaped them.

He knew now nearly the number of the savages with whom they had to contend, but this was not all he desired. He wished to ascertain for a certainty the presence of the captives and the exact spot where they were lying. He also desired to single out the renegade, that he might know him in the *mêlée* that was to ensue. In his heart he had registered a vow that none other than his own hand should take his life. If any one else should he felt as though he would be cheated out of his long-cherished hope for vengeance. To determine this he moved still nearer to the camp-fire, but saw nothing of those he sought. Then he passed entirely round the savages, but with no better result. Neither the sisters nor their inhuman captor were there! Where were they?

Borely puzzled, he asked himself the question, but could not answer it. But of one thing he felt sure, they could not be far away.

To discover where they were, then, in the darkness would be no easy task. Slowly and carefully he made his way about the fire, taking in the group about it in all ways so that he could lose sight of none that might be present. But those he sought were not there. Of this he was firmly assured. Where could they be? Was it possible that the renegade had left his savages behind him and gone on with his captives?

It did not seem probable. The girls by this time must have become so fatigued that it would be next to impossible for them to move forward.

He gazed about him in the darkness, looking to the

right and to the left. Disappointed in not making the discovery he had hoped, he was about to turn back and rejoin his comrades, when he was startled by an object which seemed to be crouching at his feet.

At first he thought it was some wild beast, and his impulse was to strike it upon the head with his rifle. But another glance showed him that it was a human being and a savage.

He would have brained it then with less compunction than he would a wild animal had it not seemed to be a very child in stature.

Reaching out his strong arm, he caught it by the shoulder and raised it from its feet to a level with his gaze.

Holding out his burden between himself and the fire, he saw that it was a misshapen dwarf clad in grotesque Indian garments.

In stature it could not have exceeded three feet, but the features were those of a person of middle age.

The strange creature made no sound, and when the ranger had viewed it to his satisfaction he placed it upon its feet again. But he still retained his hold, at a loss to know what to do with it. Should it escape him, it might bring the savages upon him before he could leave his tracks. Then he thought to himself that it had the power to do that at any moment by just opening its lips.

At that moment, when this thought was in his mind, the dwarf gazed up into his face, and, in a low tone, pronounced a single word:

"Come."

It was in the Indian tongue, but he understood its meaning well. At the same moment it caught him by the hand and moved away as though it would lead him from the spot.

Wondering what it could want, and why it was that it had sought him, the giant followed the dwarfish companion.

It led him away from the camp-fire and farther from his companions, until at last he stopped, and in a low tone demanded whether it was leading him.

"Is not the pale-faced warrior seeking for the white maidens?" asked the dwarf, in answer to his question.

"Yes," he answered, astonished at the question from his companion, and that his errand should thus be known.

"Then follow me and you shall see them," said the dwarf.

"Who are you?"

"My skin is red, but my heart is like that of the pale-faces. The red men call me the Snake because my body is so twisted like one. But if my body is ill-shaped the Great Spirit has put more cunning in my head than he has in theirs. When they treat me ill I ask the storm-spirit to help me outwit them, and he does so. But we must not talk thus; our voices must be as hushed as the woods before the storm breaks. If the pale-face warrior would see the white maidens let him follow the Snake, and make no sound."

"Where are they?"

"Not far away. The white man whose heart is as black as the crow has hidden them where he thinks they will be safe. But the Snake can find them, though he hides them in the caves amid the rocks."

"Then you can lead me to the spot?" said the ranger, eagerly.

"The Snake has said."

"And the renegade, where is he? I mean the white man whose heart is as black as the crow's back."

"He was with them just now, and he will keep guard over them to-night to see that they do not escape."

"Are they far from here?"

"No. So near that the swift-footed deer could have reached them while we have been standing here."

"Will you lead me to them?"

"Yes, the Snake will do the bidding of the white man in this thing. Let him follow, and in a little time he shall stand before them face to face."

Dick thought for a moment. His heart leapt with joy at the thought of so soon standing face to face with his enemy—the villain whom he had sought for three long years, who had till now escaped him. Surely there could be no danger to him in accompanying his strange companion.

He wished that he had his friends with him, though not from any motive of fear. They could care for the maidens while he dealt with the renegade. He wanted no aid there. He claimed him as his own prey.

"Lead on, I will follow you," he said to the dwarf, who during this conversation had not let go his hand. "But mind," he added, in a threatening tone, "if you attempt to play the traitor with me I will grind you under my heel as soon as I would any other snake."

The dwarf gave a grunt, but whether of assent

or approval he could not tell, then without farther words moved forward.

For a little way they kept in the valley, then the Snake turned abruptly to the right. The ranger kept close behind, and, after a few steps farther, their advance was blocked up by a huge mass of rock that appeared to have fallen from the cliff above them.

In the darkness Dick could see no way by which they could advance farther in this direction. But his conductor was more familiar with the place than he. Still keeping him by the hand, he led him a little to the left. Here the rock seemed to have been cleft asunder by some tremendous force of Nature from top to bottom. A narrow passage lay between just wide enough for a man to pass through with ease.

The dwarf glided in without any trouble, but it was with difficulty that Dick followed him.

For some dozen paces the cleft continued, then they emerged into a sort of court surrounded on all sides by high walls. It was open above, for he could see the stars shining overhead, but they cast but little light down into the spot where he was. Across this court the dwarf led him, but paused when another wall of rock arose before them.

"Let the pale-face remain here for a moment," he said, letting go his hold upon the hand of the ranger. "The Snake will creep round to see that all is well."

He had gone in a moment, and before it occurred to the ranger not to allow him to leave him. But he had gone now, and there was no help for it.

It seemed that the rock before him had opened and swallowed him up. There was nothing for him to do then but to remain quietly where he was and wait the dwarf's return. But what if he, all the time, had meant to play him false? He could hardly believe this, for he might have brought the savages upon him at any moment that he chose. He would wait for a little while, then, if he did not return, he would make his way back through the cleft in the rock, and rejoin his companions.

He counted the moments as they went by, and at last he began to grow impatient. What could the Snake be doing that he had been gone so long? He called aloud his name, but there was no answer. Then he raised his voice and repeated it again. But only the echoes of the place came back in answer.

He would have called still louder had he dared, but he was afraid his voice might reach the savages about the camp-fire. Did the dwarf mean to play him false? This question he again asked himself, and was more than half inclined to reply in the affirmative. In what other way could his prolonged absence be accounted for? Still he remained standing quietly where he was for a minute longer. Then he felt sure that he heard a light footstep close to him. He called the dwarf by name again, but heard no answer. Then he turned upon his heel and groped his way back towards the cleft in the rocks. But before he reached it a sudden light flashed up which illuminated the spot and revealed to him the trap into which he had been led.

At the end of the cleft stood the renegade with a rifle pointed at his breast.

CHAPTER VI.

WE left the companions of Dick standing upon the very verge of the hostile camp, trying to determine if those they sought were there. But, as we have already stated, they could see nothing of their friends. What was next to be done?

In their present position there was no chance for an exchange of opinion. Such a course would be fraught with danger. The slightest whisper might reach the ears of one of the red-skins, and thus their presence be revealed. The odds against them were too much to be thus risked. There could be little hope of success when the difference was at least four to one. As much as they wished to avenge the murder of Frank Haven and his family, it would not do to attempt it now. They must not risk too much until Ruth and Edith Haven were in their hands.

Assured that they were nowhere about the fire, Rube Granger made a signal with his hand for his companions to fall back to a spot where they could quietly consult together as to what was best to be done. They understood the motion, and at once commenced to obey. As ill luck would have it the Irishman stepped upon a big stick lying upon the earth, which snapped in twain with a report almost like the report of a pistol.

It startled them all, the two savage sentinels as well.

Both left their places by their sleeping comrades, and moved stealthily out towards our friends.

Each dropped his rifle and drew his knife. With this weapon they could work in silence they hoped.

Cautiously the savages crept towards them, and motionless they awaited their coming.



[DICK IN A TRAP.]

In the dense shadows that lay about, and owing to the effect of the firelight upon their eyes, the red-skins could not discern them in the darkness. Therefore they stumbled upon them before they were aware of their presence, despite their usual caution. It was two against one, and the savages had but little chance.

The blows of our friends were stout and true, and as they descended the red-skins went down beneath them.

So quickly and so silently was it done that hardly a sound smote upon the still night air. There was a low cry from the lips of one of the savages, but it was hushed in a moment by the fingers of the Irishman upon his throat. There was a slight struggle, then all was over.

Hastily our friends glanced towards the camp-fire to see if any sound had reached the sleeping red-skins. To all appearance there had not, for they were lying as motionless as they had been all the while.

"Follow me," exclaimed Rube, in a whisper, as he moved silently back.

They obeyed him, for now that the ranger was missing they looked upon him as a leader.

A half-dozen rods away from the fire he paused.

"Well, boys, what is to be done next?" he said.

"Indeed I do not know," answered Simon. "What can have become of Dick?"

"You know as well as I. It does not seem to me that harm has come to him. Had he met with an accident we should have known it I think. These red-skins, instead of sleeping so quietly, would have been on the alert at once."

"So it seems to me," said Philip.

"What can have become of Ruth and Edith?" said Simon. "Oh, Philip! what if harm should come to them at the hands of the renegade while we are standing idly here? Ruth was to be my wife and Edith yours in a few weeks."

"It almost maddens me to think of it," answered the young man. "But they cannot be far away. Let us do something at once. We must lose no time until we find them."

"What do you say, Rube?" said Simon, addressing the hunter.

"I say that what we have to do we must do at once. At any moment some of the red-skins yonder may awake and miss them who were standing guard. I believe that for some purpose of his own the renegade took the girls a short distance away. Perhaps it might be to give them shelter beneath some overhanging rock. That they are near here I have no doubt, and I think that Dick is now searching for them."

"Faith, and that is my mind to a shaving," ex-

claimed the Irishman. "By jabers! his ghost ain't come back as he said it would, and by that token we may know that he's alive somewhere."

"Then let us go on the search for them at once," said Philip. "Unless we can do something before these savages are astir we can do nothing afterwards. Somehow the thought occurs to me that it would be the best thing we could do to fall upon them and attempt to slay them all where they lie."

"That would be risking too much," answered Rube. "That they deserve to be butchered is certain. But we are not so much trying to avenge Frank as we are to save his sisters, who are to be your wives so soon. The savages are buried in slumber now, and let us steal past them and search every nook and corner of this valley. I cannot help thinking that Dick is doing his best to find them, and let us do the same."

"Faith and that is the right kind of talk," exclaimed the Irishman. "Let's be off at once. If I only had my own shillelah here that I left behind me in ould Ireland, I would crush the head of every mother's son of them as they lay there flat on their backs. Bad luck to the time when I forgot it, sure!"

No farther time was lost in conversation, and our friends retraced their steps in the direction of the Indian camp. Arrived once more in sight of it, they saw that everything was as quiet as before. The savages appeared to be soundly sleeping, unmindful of the fate which had befallen their companions. With the utmost caution they approached and passed the spot where they lay. Still the red-skins continued motionless as though devoid of life. As they had been without sleep the night before, slumber weighed heavily upon their eyelids.

A little beyond the camp our friends paused, and consulted together for a moment in low whispers. The result of the conference was that when the rest went on Simon remained behind. He was to keep his eye upon the slumbering savages, and to give the alarm in case of danger.

Slowly and cautiously they moved up the valley, straining their eyes in the darkness, seeking the missing ones. But no trace of them could they discover on either hand. Neither could they follow the trail farther. It seemed as though the earth must have opened and engulfed them.

Despairing of finding the trail farther on, Rube and his companions turned about to retrace their steps. The hunter was completely mystified. He could not account for their disappearance. Neither could he for the absence of Dick. He could but couple the disappearance of one with that of the other.

If harm had befallen the latter, it did not seem to have come from the savages. At least not from those who were so quietly sleeping about the camp-fire.

"There must be some cavern in the hills here," he muttered, in a low tone. "Some hiding-place that the renegade knows of. He's hidden 'em there, and we ought to have the eyes of an owl to find 'em out."

"That must surely be the case," said Philip.

"By jabers! that's my mind to a shaving," observed the Irishman.

"What shall we do?" asked Philip. "The night is wearing away, and when the morning comes, if not before, this place will be too hot to hold us. Still how can I ever leave this spot until I know my Edith's fate, and, if alive, take her with me?"

"I hardly know what to do," said the hunter, in a tone which told that he was completely at his wits' end. "Still something must be done and at once. It will never do for us to leave the girls here or to turn our backs upon this spot till we know what has become of Dick. Some harm must have chanced to him or he would have been with us before this."

"Faith, and I'll give ye a bit of advice," said the Irishman.

"Let us have it," answered Rube.

"Ye shall as fast as my tongue can wag. Let's go and crack iverly one of the haythens on the head, bad luck to 'em, afore they wake up. Then we can stay here till the peep o' day, and if anybody else dares to step on our toes why let 'em come on."

"I don't know but what you are right," said Philip, hesitating. "I hardly know what else we can do. But the odds against us are great, and by attempting this we risk and may lose all."

Rube was silent for a moment.

"If we can steal upon them unawares and make every blow tell, we may do it," he said. "But, should we miss one, it will go hard with us. It's a desperate thing, boys, but I see no other way."

"Then let's be after cracking 'em at once," said the Irishman. "Faith, Malloy is good for half of 'em himself."

"Hark!" exclaimed Philip. "There is trouble there now. I'm afraid that Simon is in danger."

Hardly had the words left his lips before the sharp report of a rifle rang out on the still night air, and went echoing again and again along the valley. But soon mingled with the sound were the fierce war-whoops from a score of savage throats, telling our friends that the red-skins were alarmed and upon their feet, seeking for a foe.

(To be continued.)



[THE BLOW NOT STRUCK.]

THROUGH DARKNESS TO DAWN.

CHAPTER XIX.

It is a greater grief
To bear love's wrong than hate's known injury.

Shakespeare.

MR. TREDDLE had gone to Manchester on Mr. Spiderby's business after all. He was led to this decision more by the desire to rest his mind and to review his position away from the circumstances which continually embarrassed him at home than by any other motive.

The fact was that Effie Cooper's assertion that Peter was deceiving him—concealing important facts, while yet trying to urge him on to make a public accusation against his employer—annoyed and preplexed him more than anything which had occurred since Peter first made his revelation. This, together with the loss of his pocket-book containing the paper which he had abstracted from Spiderby's desk, so disconcerted him as to make him really ill. He would have grown to regard Peter's whole story as a bugbear of his imagination—or an act of malicious revenge for the insult offered his sister, in which he was cunning enough to wish the cashier to share, as being a person of more influence than himself—had it not been for some discoveries which he had made in going over Smith's books.

Certain that he held the key to Spiderby's infamous accusations against Glaston, he was not yet fully prepared to openly charge upon him the murder. If Peter had acted differently Treddle doubtless would, despite the loss of the scrap of paper, the very next day after its abstraction have applied for a warrant for Spiderby's arrest. But the small reliance to be placed on the porter kept him undecided.

Not even the intense happiness of the newly accepted lover—not the thought of Katrine's "sweetest eyes ever were seen"—could prevent a sense of danger, and a feeling as if his brain was over-wrought. So he consulted with Katy—told her of Spiderby's offer to give him half of one thousand pounds if he would go and collect it—and asked her advice.

"I shall not be gone more than one month," he added.

"I would not have you lose such an opportunity just to stay here to cheer us up," she said, with prompt bravery. "We can live without you for four weeks, I am sure. Vain creature! did you think we could not?"

"Five hundred pounds are as much nearly as I can earn in two years, Katrine—think of that! I shall

feel rich enough to start in business for myself—or to buy a very, very modest little home. I have always thought that a man in good health, with ever so small a home paid for, was quite prepared to take a wife. What is your opinion, mademoiselle?"

"Oh, I haven't formed any opinion on such subjects yet. Don't forget what I told you, Mr. Treddle—that I am engaged to my sister!"

"I don't forget it, Katy, but I have my hopes of you, after all."

Thus, with plenty of conversation of interest only to themselves, they settled the question of the business trip. Once settled, it did not take Treddle long to prepare for it. In less than twenty-four hours he was off by express, leaving Katrine to fight against the depressing influences which surrounded her as best she might.

Spiderby's waxy complexion almost brightened as the train rolled out of the station with his cashier in it.

"If the town of Burnley see him again within a year, I am not so persuasive as I think I am! Miss Bromley's eyes shall grow dim watching for him, I swear. I owe her something for her unreasonable spite against me. If she were on my side I should feel far more sure of my beautiful Alice's favour. Confound it! I must make her believe I am doing great things for Treddle. If the other one were as easily disposed of I believe I should begin to sleep again of nights."

Never, never, Mr. Spiderby! There is a burden sometimes borne by the mind of man which is so heavy as to produce a hideous nightmare fatal to all peaceful sleep.

Peter Cooper might have trembled in his shoes were it not for two small facts which interposed in his favour—any accident happening to a second person about the bank might arouse investigations; and, secondly, the porter might have made confidences in the bosom of his family which would prove dangerous.

Therefore Spiderby clung to the policy which he had begun from the first hour in which he had suspected his porter of a deeper knowledge of his affairs than was desirable. It would be impossible to tell what first awakened his fears. The rustle of a leaf affrights the hidden fugitive. Some insolence of manner, some cunning look of the eye, or emphasis of a word had placed him on his guard. Since, which he had renewed his extreme kindness to the family. He went often to sit for an hour with them as in those days when he was pursuing the young sister with an object which the stern virtue of the family happily frustrated. He was so penitent, he desired so

earnestly to be placed on his old footing, confiding to them that he intended soon to marry, that they scarcely had firmness to resist his advances.

Mrs. Cooper, regarding him with unutterable horror, patiently waiting for her son to get ready to denounce him, with difficulty endured his visits. Chilled with dislike and fear, she yet smiled when he smiled, blaming herself when he went away for not being able to wholly resist the blandishments of the tempter.

The man of the world was not long in detecting his influence over poor Effie. He saw the flutterings of heart which she flattered herself passed unnoticed. He noted the fluctuations of colour in her fair cheek. He knew why her eyes avoided his. That she was glad for him to come, that she was wretched when he went away, he saw with triumph—not that he any longer proposed to make use of her love to tempt her to a wrong course, but that he said to himself:

"She would die sooner than harm me. In her I have an ally."

That this was truth her interview with Treddle shows.

But shrewd and politic as was the courtly banker—versed in women's hearts—he did not count upon another passion in Effie's breast as strong as her love, which thrived so rankly as to threaten to uproot its companion. When he announced his speedy marriage he had not discovered how madly the girl was infatuated with him, and had sought only to place her mother and herself at ease with regard to his intentions in renewing his friendship.

He could not guess the wild and bitter jealousy which his statement set growing in the heart of a maiden apparently so meek and undemonstrative as Effie Cooper.

No one could have guessed it. She herself was ignorant of her own nature until she felt the whirlwind raging.

Effie had grown up in the knowledge that she was handsome, and—what was still better in her estimation—of "lady-like" appearance. Quiet and modest as she really was, she had that indomitable ambition "to be as good as the best." Her humble origin and her present poverty were no barriers in her eyes to her some day becoming a merchant's or banker's wife. Then, too, she had a keener intellect than many fashionable young ladies; she loved reading, had a taste for poetry, and a longing for all the refinements of life. She might have married some intelligent mechanic, have kept for him a pretty and tasteful home, and together they might have climbed

several rounds in the social ladder. But the attentions of Mr. Spiderby had been fatal. She never confessed to her mother that she had dreamed of becoming his wife—that he had won her affections, excited her fancy, and kindled her ambition to the highest.

In that first pain and mortification of his insulting proposition her pride had come to her aid, enabling her to conceal how deep was the wound both her heart and her vanity had received. She professed to have looked up to him with esteem and gratitude only.

But, oh! her heart was sore! The wound was a poisoned one, that festered, and would not heal. The venom in the sting consisted in the proof that the banker—the fine gentleman who had selected her for his admiration—did not esteem her equal to the position of his wife. She believed that with elegant dress and improved opportunities she would soon have been able to compete with the ladies of Burnley.

She had enjoyed many opportunities of studying these same ladies from her unnoticed position in her little sewing-chair at the fashionable dress-maker's where she was employed. She had copied their styles of dress in more humble materials; she had studied their manners, the tones of their voices, and had noticed the subjects of their remarks.

Consider the passions at work in this girl's breast! Three of the strongest feelings which can urge a woman to desperation—disappointed love, mortified vanity, and intolerable jealousy. The habit of repression, of quiet endurance, of modest shame, taught through all her life, was not strong enough to hold this fierce trio well in hand. Tragedy in some shape could hardly fail to come of them.

Little the banker dreamed how this poor girl, whom he would have spurned with his foot did not prudence prompt him to flatter her, dogged his footsteps at night, studied his face and his voice when he came to her mother's, set little traps in seemingly innocent speeches, until she had convinced herself who was the lady he was about to marry.

At first, as was quite natural, she had suspected Miss Bromley; but her sharpened observation enabled her to correct the mistake very soon.

Mrs. Glaston!

Aha! here was the motive which led to that dark drama, enacted by the flickering light of a candle, with one hidden spectator crouching in fear and horror in the shadows of the pit.

CHAPTER XX.

Oh, fear not in a world like this,
And thou shalt know ere long—
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong.

Longfellow.

HAVING made this discovery, Effie's next desire was to learn if Spiderby's wicked love were returned by its object. Here, however, her facilities for acquiring a correct knowledge were more limited.

It was the current belief of the town that if ever there was a heart-broken mourner, Mrs. Glaston was that one. Effie frequently heard the ladies who were waiting in the shop to try on their dresses discussing the young widow and her affairs. There was but one opinion expressed by them all—Mrs. Glaston was heart-broken. She had no interest in life—friends, society, her own health, everything—had become indifferent to her. She was always referred to with the deepest pity. Effie never heard a harsh criticism upon her; for so utterly helpless did this young and lovely woman appear in her deep affliction that ill-nature was dumb before the spectacle.

Latterly, since the administrator had settled the estate, there was much talk about Mrs. Glaston's affairs. People were surprised to find that she had such little means left, discussing anew the suicide of her husband, and finding some reason for it in the state of affairs now revealed. Some thought she would have her house left—others had heard not.

In the midst of all this gossip, listened to by Effie with an eager ear, never once did she hear the most distant allusion made to Spiderby, connecting his name with that of the widow in any other way than as her late husband's partner and her kind personal friend.

There was one secret safe as yet from the gossips of Burnley. The little dressmaker, stitching away in her quiet corner, treasured up their conversation, thinking with a sort of scornful pleasure how much truer was her knowledge of the real character of all these personages than that of society.

Of all but Mrs. Glaston. Her she knew only by repute. Whether she was a hopeless, listless mourner, as the world said, or whether her allegiance to the dead was already wavering—indeed, whether she had not been a consenting party to a guilty scheme with Spiderby before Mr. Glaston's sudden putting-away—these were questions which Effie resolved to solve for herself.

She must see this unhappy lady—this rival of hers!

Day by day the desire gnawed in her breast until she finally went straight to Mrs. Glaston's house and asked for her. She chose a morning hour, and made sure that Spiderby was in the bank by passing it on her way and asking her brother. She did not wish him to know of her call on the lady; he was so subtle himself that he would at once suspect something under her errand, which was to be a simple request for needlework to do.

It was a bitterly cold February day on which Effie rang the door-bell of that stately, tasteful house. She shivered with the cold, but still more with her own emotions. A supercilious servant-girl came to the summons, and looked with visible contempt on the seamstress, knowing at a glance that this was "a person," and not an associate of her ladies.

"Can I see Mrs. Glaston?"

"Don't know. She don't see many people now-a-days. Will you give me your name, or send up your card?" the girl answered, with immense sarcasm.

"I have no card. My name is Effie Cooper. My brother is porter at the bank. I came to see if Mrs. Glaston had any kind of needlework which she could give me—plain, fancy, or dressmaking. Please give her the whole errand, and say that I would like particularly to be allowed to speak to her."

"Step in and take a seat in the hall," answered Rosa, a little taken down by the directness of the seamstress and a certain dignity which was habitual with her, albeit she was now trembling in spirit and body before the ordeal which still she courted.

The servant ran up the stairs, leaving Effie sitting in the hall, stealing curious glances at the elegance which, even in the portals of this beautiful home, struck her with awe.

Before she had half-completed her survey Rosa returned, saying that the ladies would see her if she would come up to Mrs. Glaston's room.

Eagerly, yet with shame and reluctance—for she felt mean and guilty with the consciousness of her true errand—Effie followed Rosa up the splendid, wide, elaborate staircase, over the velvet carpet of the upper hall, on into the chamber where Mrs. Glaston spent the most of her time. Here the servant retreated, and Effie was met by a dark, bright, beautiful young lady, of about her own age, who smiled upon her almost tenderly, saying, in the sweetest voice:

"You are chilled through, Miss Cooper, I know, by your looks. Come to the fire."

Poor Effie stumbled forward and sat awkwardly on the chair—not that she was either bashful or awkward, she was naturally graceful and quiet, but she was embarrassed by her secret thoughts.

"So you are Peter's sister," said a low, very low, very sad voice near the window. "He has been in the bank since it first existed. A steady, reliable young man, my—they always told me."

Then, turning in the direction of the silver-sad tones, Effie saw for the first time, without her bonnet, this lady whom jealousy had taught her to hate. A slender little creature, whose fairness and whose delicacy borrowed a touch of melancholy from her sable dress. A sweet, sweet face, kissed all about by glittering, careless curls—a face which once must have been as arch and merry as it was tender, but now colourless and smileless.

Oh, the pathos of those blue eyes! Tears came into Effie's as she met their soft glance. Her jealous dislike could not live under their patient light. She felt that she had intruded where she had neither business nor right, and her voice and hands trembled yet more as she stammered out:

"Yes, Mrs. Glaston, Peter is my brother. I am working at Madame Damont's, but my wages there are small. Madame is hard with her girls. I could earn as much more by sewing through the evenings. I am a nice workwoman. I embroider linen, or could do any kind of needlework you have to give me."

It went against the grain to be begging sewing of this lady, whose social equal she had aspired and still aspired to be—holding secrets in her possession which made her in a manner mistress of the situation—but this was the part Effie had come to play, and she was surprised into performing it with more humility than she had expected.

The luxurious surroundings of these two beautiful ladies—their ease of manner, their soft, low voices, their elegant movements, the perfection of their dress—not so costly or elaborate as it was complete in every little appointment, from the ribbon in the hair to the rosette on the slipper—taught her in one impressive lesson how wild had been her ambition when she had believed the wealthy banker meant to choose her when he had friends like these from whom to make his selection of a wife. She recalled her mother's homely "front room;" then, through the burning cloud of envy which wrapped her senses and her soul, she heard Miss Bromley's gay voice, saying:

"Mrs. Glaston has just promised to employ me,

Miss Cooper. I am sorry to usurp any of the patronage which should belong to the regular workers—doubly sorry if you really need the work—since I know that this is the most severe portion of the year to those whose circumstances are limited; but, if we were to employ and not pay you, that would be worse still! We are poor people now. We have our own living to earn from this time forward. To-day—tomorrow—the first day on which Mrs. Glaston is well enough, we go out of this expensive house into some little home; then, who knows? perhaps I shall be looking out for plain sewing. I tell you the candid truth to soften our refusal. We must cut down our expenses to the smallest limit—learn to wait on ourselves. We may be glad to come to you for a few lessons."

She said this so brightly and so sweetly, seeming not at all discouraged by her own confession of poverty, but to be upheld by some inward strength of character, looking every inch the lady and the handsome belle while she said it; that Effie felt like a keen reproach to her own weakness.

"Oh, if I could be like that!" she thought. Then, instantly, with a fiery thrill of joy, "If this be true, she cannot be intending to marry Mr. Spiderby! He would never allow it if she is to be his wife—never! Either she has rejected him or does not know of his feelings for her; or else Miss Bromley is only playing 'goodby.' I don't believe they would ever come down to plain work. It isn't credible."

To Effie Cooper's nature it was not credible. A life of luxury without toil would have tempted her to take almost any course open to her.

But these ladies whom she so envied were finer grained. Their principles were as noble as their feelings were sensitive. They were far, far above the average of fashionable women, whereas Effie, with a year or two of practice, would have made an admirable woman of the world.

These ladies were of the blood and the training which would sacrifice wealth, ease, position, life itself, before they would accept favours from one who exacted in return what Spiderby had demanded.

They were about to fly from him—from his house—from the servants whom he paid—the food his money bought. In vain he had urged, beseeched, humbled himself, promised never to return to the subject of his hopes until Alice herself gave him permission.

That permission she knew never would be given, and she could not, while he was deceiving himself, place herself under farther obligations to him.

She had nearly forgiven him the cruel outrage of her feelings which his fond declaration had caused; she was sorry for him, she felt friendly towards him, and grateful for his kindness—but all money favours must be at once refused peremptorily.

The helpless, listless woman expanded suddenly into a heroine.

It was not from a deficiency of character that Mrs. Glaston had appeared so dependent thus far in our story. Blind—deaf—dumb—prostrated by her awful, sudden affliction—she was indeed for a time like one stricken by a mental paralysis. Yet the very intensity of her suffering proved the depth of her nature. Very glad she had been to lean on her young, fresh sister in the hour of her agony. All the ordinary affairs of life had grown to her like shadows; she let them pass, while the only real thing to her was her ghostly sorrow.

But Spiderby's advances had roused her out of her long inaction.

Her white cheek blushed with indignation at the thought that Harry's widow could be thus approached. Katrina, with all her fire, was no longer the leading spirit in determination to get away from under Spiderby's roof, and put a stop to the expenses of the household, which, it now became evident, he must have been defraying.

The faces of the two sisters burned at the thought. Should they sit idly in this home which was no longer theirs, and let any man or any friend on earth place them under obligations which might hereafter hamper their independence?

The most pinching penury appeared welcome to them in contrast with such an alternative. They did not go to bed on that night of Spiderby's avowal until they had resolved to leave the house as soon as possible, and to do something to help themselves without appealing to Harry's relatives or their own far-distant uncle.

In the first glow of courage it appeared not so difficult this doing something for a living. Katrina was a fine musician, with a brilliant style. She had a voice fit for church-singing. She would sing in church for a salary, she would give music lessons, in the evenings she would do needlework.

"And you, dainty Alice, shall keep our two little rooms like a bower of roses. You shall cook such wee, delicious dishes for us two; you shall send back Mr. Spiderby's pearls; you shall sell the handsome things which your uncle gave you, and pay

back Mr. Spiderby's little bills for the winter; but all the things dear Harry ever gave, which are rightfully ours, we will keep; with them we will fit up our tiny home, and there we will live and love together the rest of our natural lives."

"But Mr. Treddle, Katy?"

"Some prettier girl may have him, my darling. I like him very much, but not so much as I like you. At least, he does not need me so much. And I think he has entirely forgotten me ages ago. Four weeks, and never a letter! You know I wouldn't speak to him now, Alice, if he were to come back and ask me."

Only three days later Effie Cooper came to them with her application for work. She had considered that by obtaining sewing of Mrs. Glaston she would have liberty to come frequently to the house, and by means of these opportunities she had intended to carry on her espionage of Spiderby.

Now it appeared that she was not to get work here. She scarcely knew whether to be glad or sorry. She would not have the chance she had desired; at the same time, it looked as if Mrs. Glaston could not be the lady to whom Spiderby was engaged. Yet she was positive that he was infatuated with her. Looking in the widow's face she could not but feel that she was innocent of any sympathy with his love. Yet he loved her, he loved her! and all Mrs. Glaston's sweetness and beauty were so many reasons for Effie's envy if not malice.

Overwhelmed by a sense of her own inferiority she arose to go.

"I hope it's not so bad as that, ladies," she said, half-sullenly; "you have friends who will not permit it, I'm sure—Mr. Spiderby for one."

She darted a keen look at Mrs. Glaston.

"Friends are all the better friends when you do not try their friendship too severely," answered Katrine, coldly.

Something in Effie's tone savoured of impertinence she felt.

"Do you mean to say that you're actually willing I should go to the shop and say that Mrs. Glaston and Miss Bromley are so reduced as to wish to take in work?" asked Effie.

"If you find it necessary to talk about our affairs at all, you are at liberty to say that when you applied for work, you were told that we expected to do our own sewing henceforth. When I am ready to begin business I daresay I shall advertise in the papers, which will be nearly as good a medium for making my wishes known as Madame Daumont's shop," answered Miss Bromley, politely and caustically.

Effie blushed. She knew that she had met the kind frankness of the ladies in a mean spirit, which they must set down to her ignorance and presumption. Yet she was not mean or presuming. It was only the hateful jealousy within which had made her unlike herself.

"You must excuse me," she said, recovering something of her natural manner, "I was curious to know if it could be possible you were as willing as you seemed to come down from your high place. Most people would do everything to hide the change. I would, I know, if I were in your place. I respect both of you far too highly to ever mention your names at Madame Daumont's. I'm not such a one, believe me. I never gossip. And if I can ever be of service to you I'd consider it a privilege."

"Thank you," answered Katrine, laughing out in her cheery way; "who knows but what we may need you ever so much, somehow? At least, we will not forget your kind offer. Don't go until you are thoroughly warm."

"Oh, I'm quite warm," cried Effie; and she looked so.

Her face burned uncomfortably; she was glad to say good morning and go out of that chamber; yet she had to acknowledge to herself the real kindness and friendliness with which she had been received.

"They are as good as they are beautiful, both of them," she thought as she went down the stairs. "I don't wonder he's crazy after her, now I've seen her and heard her. I didn't know anybody ever was so exquisitely pretty, and her voice is enough to win anybody. I'm handsome, I know that, but I'm not like her."

At the same time Mrs. Glaston was saying to Katrine:

"What could she mean by speaking of Mr. Spiderby as she did? Can it be possible that people think—that there are rumours—gossip? Oh, Katy, that would kill me!"

"She meant nothing, of course," was the soothing reply. "She knows that he was Harry's friend and partner, and that he thinks much of the family. She would not dare—she, a stranger—to insinuate anything beyond that. You are morbid, my precious."

"I daresay I am, Katy. But I take it as a warning, nevertheless. A warning to prevent placing or keeping myself in a position where such things can be said."

Why not go out this afternoon, Katrine, and look for rooms? I shall not grow strong while the dread of it is hanging over me. But in doing, acting, I may. I would like to get out of this house before Mr. Spiderby comes here again. To think of its being his, Katy!" she said, looking about the beautiful room with quivering lips.

She was thinking of the fond pride with which Harry had bought and furnished it for her.

"I wish we could steal a march on him!" cried Katrine.

But such was not to be their good fortune.

As Effie Cooper left the house she encountered Mr. Spiderby on the steps. She could not look as innocent as she would have liked—the meeting was so unexpected that she had not time to school her features.

He also in his surprise forgot his usual cunning suavity, speaking more sharply than policy would have dictated.

"What are you doing here?"

It was as if he had said to a dog, "Get out of my way, dog!"

She was in no mood to be spoken to thus; her eyes flashed:

"What are you doing here? I came to see the future Mrs. Spiderby."

He could not bear that title applied to the woman he loved without flushing. He half-laughed, chuckled Effie under the chin, and said:

"So did I."

The next instant he recalled that, in view of Mr. Glaston's very recent decease, he had best keep such intentions hidden even from this young girl, whom hitherto he could always "twist round his finger."

"I was only jesting," he added, "as I suppose you were, little Effie. My future wife resides in London. Mrs. Glaston is in great trouble, and I'm bound to stand by her as a friend, for her husband's sake. We are settling up the business now, which brings me here occasionally."

He pulled a business-looking envelope from his pocket, ringing the bell as he did so.

"Hypocrite!"

She whispered the word to herself; she did not wish to make Spiderby afraid of her just yet.

CHAPTER XXI.

Shut doors after you: Fast bind, fast find;

A proverb never stale in thrifty mind.

Merchant of Venice.

TOWARDS sunset of that day the weather suddenly moderated. The sky filled with masses of light-gray clouds, and snow began to fall; soft large flakes descended slowly, then as they grew thicker and thicker, crowding each other, they hurried more; gusts of wind began to whirl them about; the air was dim, and the earth fast being covered under great drifts.

Katrine, who had been out through the afternoon, engaged in an anxious search for "apartments to let," grew to be like a snow-lady as she hurried along the streets, so much so did the damp, feathery particles cling to her hat, and curls, and cloak, and even to her face, though there they were quickly melted, running down in tears, which were like tears of mirth rather than sorrow, as her dark eyes danced and cheeks glowed with rapid walking and that exhilaration of spirits which makes experiences of this kind only a source of frolic to the young and healthy.

She had not found any apartments suiting in all respects, but she was not discouraged; what they wanted could certainly be found in the nice old town. Meantime the feeling that she had really begun her new life put her in high spirits.

Katrine was not the only one hurrying through the storm before night should close in. Coming from an opposite direction, with a step which was almost a run, was a man who, as he came nearer Mrs. Glaston's, gradually slackened his speed, and at the moment the young lady came up had halted and was looking up at the window. Miss Bromley gave him an instant's inquiring attention, for she thought that he must be searching for some number. He met her eyes with a keen, curious look, but he said nothing.

"Were you looking for any particular house?"

She was too kind-hearted to pass him without giving him the information he desired if it were in her power.

"Thank you, miss; I was not looking for this house. I see this is Mr. Glaston's, and I want Mr. Smith's."

"Carleton Smith? one-eighty-nine."

"Thank you. Blustering storm, isn't it?"

"It is, indeed," and Katrine ran up the steps.

She paused with her hand on the bell-handle to look after the stranger. He was so powdered with snow that she could scarcely judge to what class he belonged. His hat was old-fashioned and cheap, his boots heavy and coarse, she could see that. Yet

he had not the air of a beggar, nor exactly of a gentleman. All of his face visible beneath his slouched felt hat was covered by an unkempt beard, so laden with snow as to give him a likeness to the pictures of Old Father Time.

The reason why Miss Bromley gave the man so much attention was this: The thought had occurred to her that this might be a burglar, examining the exits and entrances of the dwelling with a view to night-work.

Katrine's feminine weakness was a fear of burglars. It required this weakness, perhaps, to perfect her character; without it she might have been too strong-minded. The stranger's curious look had made an impression on her. She now remarked that he, though pretending to hasten on, turned and looked back.

As Rosa admitted her, and began to relieve her of her damp outer wrappings, Katrine said to her:

"Do you and cook be very careful about fastening up the house to-night. These stormy, windy nights are just the ones chosen by burglars."

"Oh, my! you don't say so, Miss Bromley. I do wish Mrs. Glaston would take back Johnny. I ain't half-slept since he was dismissed. If I hear a sound in the night I'm all of a tremble. What did she send Johnny away for?"

"Because she could not afford such high wages to a man whom she didn't really need. We can't recall John, but we can keep the house well bolted and barred. Don't go and work yourself into a panic, Rosa. I was not serious, except to remind you to be careful."

"We've two bolts on our bedroom door, and we pull the bedstead against it besides. I shouldn't rest if we didn't, with folks knowing as how we're here without even a coachman to take our parts."

"You must be safe, then, whatever happens," laughed Katrine as she ran upstairs to her sister's room.

Immediately they began to discuss her afternoon's adventures.

"There was one suite of rooms which I thought might possibly answer in case we found nothing better," chattered Katrine, walking towards the window as she spoke; "two bedrooms and a small parlour; but the neighbourhood is not—Oh! dear me, Alice, I'm morally certain we are to have a visit from burglars to-night."

"What's the matter, Katy?"

"Just come here and see this fellow on the pavement. He's taking an observation, and he must have some purpose in it. It's so dark here he cannot see us; he does not suspect we are watching him."

"Why do you think he's a burglar, Katy dear?" inquired Mrs. Glaston, putting one hand on her sister's shoulder and peering down into the semi-twilight out of doors.

"Because this is the second time at least that he has reconnoitred this house. When I came home I found him standing just as he does now. I asked him whom he wanted to find, and he answered, 'Smith.' Don't you know, Alice, they always say 'Smith' when obliged to fix upon a name?"

"No, do they? You make me timid, Katy. His conduct is strange."

"It is strange. He moved on after I spoke to him, and now he has come back. He's one of a band, I daresay."

"Oh, Katy, I feel faint!" gasped Mrs. Glaston, turning suddenly from the window with a startled, pale face.

"Is it possible that I've given you such a fright?" asked Katrine, supporting her to the sofa. "I was wrong not to remember how nervous and weak you are. Indeed—indeed, Alice, I was about half in just. This house is unusually secure in its fastenings. Now let us forget all about this fellow. Or, if you say so, I will send for the policeman, and ask him to 'take particular notice' to-night. With him on special guard we shall feel entirely comfortable."

"I was not frightened," returned Mrs. Glaston as soon as she could speak. "I do not know what was the matter with me. I received a shock of some kind—I felt like death. But I can't explain it. It did not thunder, did it?"

"Thunder in a snow-storm!"

"I've heard it more than once. It's not so very unusual, Katy. I certainly thought it thundered. There was a loud sound in my ears."

Then Mrs. Glaston became silent, not seeming inclined to say more on that or any other subject. Katrine regarded her with some anxiety.

"It's Spiderby's visit," she thought to herself. "I'm glad I stayed by her to-day. He could not say what he wanted to. What right has he to torment her? I shall have to give him a piece of my mind."

Pretty soon the tea-bell rang.

"Will you go down, Alice?"

"Yes; I don't feel like being left alone."

"I know. You are thinking of that burglar,"

laughed Katrine, attempting to rally her from the depression into which she had fallen.

"No, indeed; I'd forgotten all about him."

They went down to their tea. Katrine continued her account of her afternoon's search for apartments, while Mrs. Glaston listened almost without remark.

After tea they seated themselves for the evening in the sitting-room.

"This was always a favourite room with me," murmured Alice. "No other can ever be like it. It is as full of associations as a rose of perfumes—it breathes them. Ah! you cannot dream of the pang which will tear my heart when strangers take possession of it."

"I think I can, darling. But cruel as that will be it will not be so hard as to live in it under that baleful influence—"

"True, true!" answered Mrs. Glaston, shuddering from head to foot. "I do hope we shall be away by Saturday. Katrine, I did not tell you of Spiderby's threat to—to—disgrace Harry's memory."

"You did not. Has he been so unmerciful—so savage? I could almost believe it of him."

"He did threaten it. Yet I hardly think he would do it. Oh, no; he would not, could not! He was angry with me, and did not know what he said."

"He knew very well, and he had a fixed purpose in it," thought Katrine, but she kept the thought to herself.

"He will be so vexed when he finds that we intend to leave this house that I am afraid he will repeat it," murmured Alice.

"What then? Once for all, my dear, dear sister, do you intend to yield to this man, or to shake off his influence once and for ever? We cannot pursue a middle course. His own advances have rendered that impossible."

"I realize the truth of that more keenly than you can possibly feel it. My whole sentiments towards him have changed—more even than I thought was possible. I did respect him and trust in him as a friend of Harry's more than my own. Now I fear him. I cannot express to you how I fear him. I am something like a person who is caught on a railway—he sees the train rushing swiftly upon him, while, instead of leaping from the track, he gazes with horror and strange fascination upon the advancing doom."

"What do you mean, Alice? Surely not that you have any thoughts of yielding to that man's—"

The widow sprang up with a shriek, putting her hand over the other's mouth.

"Don't speak it. It would kill me to hear you say it," she cried.

Then she sank back trembling and sobbing, and finally, between her sobs, came this sentence to astonish and stupefy her sister:

"I don't know what I shall be tempted to do to save Harry's good name. I was so proud of him—so proud of him! Sometimes I think that it is my duty as his wife to defend his honour, his reputation, now that he can no longer act for himself, even at the sacrifice of the only happiness now left me—the privilege of mourning for him in seclusion the rest of my life."

"Defend Harry's honour by becoming Mr. Spiderby's wife. That is what you mean, Alice."

Alice bowed her face in her hands.

"In either case I shall be entirely wretched," she murmured.

"What do you think would be Harry's counsel could you appeal to him in the spirit world?" asked Katrine. "That you should buy this man's silence by the surrender of soul and body to his keeping, or that you should hold yourself sacred for a reunion with him, and allow the world to buffet his poor memory here as it may? We know or believe, darling, that if Harry did wrong he was not wholly in his right mind; and we can far better endure to live under the shadow of unjust censure than to resign our privilege of widowhood."

The young girl, in her whole-hearted alliance with her sister, used the "we" and "our" in a way that would have been laughable had it not been touching.

"I am so glad you feel so, Katrine. Oh, help me to do what Harry would most desire!" cried Alice, earnestly.

"Mr. Spiderby," announced Rosa, opening the door.

He came in smiling, easy. He looked about like a master of the mansion. With him it was plainly a question of time. He had perceived, far more plainly than Katrine, where his power over Mrs. Glaston was strongest. He must not only hold over her the threat to injure her dead Harry's fame, but he must also seek to convince her that Harry, knowing her poor and helpless by his own wrong-doing, would wish, had he any knowledge of his earthly affairs, to repair the poverty and desolation he had brought upon her by seeing her speedily united to his best friend and her truest protector.

When he offered to shake hands with Katrine she

put the tips of her fingers in his, but her dark eyes flashed defiance. He smiled undisturbed. His smile seemed to say:

"You, too, my high-mettled beauty, will have to succumb."

Katrine took up her fancy-work and sat apart, while the visitor told the news of the day in a friendly, quiet way to Mrs. Glaston.

As she bent over her work she silently studied the two. She saw how her sister trembled in his presence, yet dared not dismiss him.

"Will he master her yet?" she asked herself.

"He will have to master me first," she answered herself.

Katrine discovered that she had taken a slight cold from the dampness of the snow which had blown in about her neck pretty freely when she was out. Her throat began to feel sore. On her principle of doing all things in season she laid aside her crocheting, and ran down to the kitchen to ask cook to prepare her an antidote in the shape of some hot vinegar, butter, and sugar. Her light step on the stairs was not heard, and as she entered the kitchen she almost screamed to behold, cosily seated at table, and boldly chatting with the cook—that fellow again!

Mrs. Bridget was mightily flustered at this revelation of her charitable proclivities for feeding poor men on her mistress's provisions. She came close to Miss Bromley, whispering:

"Indeed, it's but seldom I gives bit or sup to beggars. But he seemed so genteel—not one of the common kind at all. He said he was a stranger, travelling on foot, without jist the means at present to pay them big prices to the hotels—would I give him some supper, and a cup of warm over-tay? What could a poor woman say? Shure I couldn't refuse, and him so swate-spoken, like a broken-down gentleman."

"Yes, you could refuse if you tried hard enough. These persons are the ones to beware of. Gentlemen are not usually beggars. Doubtless he has already a wax impression of the outside and inside basement door, and as soon as he can get his keys manufactured he will pay us a midnight visit. He has made good use—or rather, bad use!—of those keen eyes, I'll warrant!"

"I never thought of that! Hadn't I better go at once for the police?"

"No. You can't prove anything. I will speak to the man, and make up my mind what he is. Good evening, sir."

His head was bent down over his plate; he just nodded it, without looking up.

"You do not seem to have found Mr. Smith's yet," she observed, ironically, and Miss Bromley was brave as a lion when danger was in sight; it was only sneaking, stealing, midnight danger that made her timorous.

Besides, if the man, believing there were only women in the house, had bad designs, she was conscious of Spiderby being in the sitting-room; and for the first and only time was glad that he was there.

The stranger raised his face at this second observation with such a comical laugh in his eyes that, for the life of her, she could not refrain from an answering smile.

"It was John Smith for whom I was looking," he said.

Miss Bromley was somewhat taken aback by his presumption.

"You have had your supper," she said, "would you like anything else?—because I think best to see you dismissed before I go upstairs."

"Well, yes! I should like to stay all night."

"That we cannot permit," she responded, firmly. "But if you really have not money to pay for a lodging, I will give you that much."

"You are an uncommonly kind young lady," he answered, with what she deemed a most impertinent smile. "But I mean to stay here."

"If you think we are alone in the house, you are mistaken!"

Katrine was both angry and uneasy at his boldness. "There's another lady, I know. Cook told me so. I've made up my mind I'd like to see her. A pretty widow, they say."

"You impertinent fellow, there's a man in this house quite capable of attending to your case. He will see that you are lodged in the station-house. Cook, call Mr. Spiderby!"

"Stop a minute!" exclaimed the man, springing from the table and placing himself against the staircase door. "Who's Spiderby?"

"The owner of this house. Our friend and protector."

In her fright, and her desire to appear represented by one of the opposite sex, Katrine stretched a point in the character she gave the banker.

"Ha! Owner of this house! Going to marry you, my pretty young lady?"

"No, not me."

"Perhaps the other one—the pretty widow?"

"What business have you to ask such questions? Cook, run out to the pavement and call for help."

"She need not. Call down this Spiderby to put me out if it will be any gratification to you. I'm quite willing to swear that I will never annoy you again."

Some great change had come over the intruder's voice and looks. Heretofore he had seemed to annoy the young lady out of pure audacity and recklessness; now he certainly drooped and shrank as if guilt or shame was silencing him. But Miss Bromley was too thoroughly alarmed and angry to let him off so easily. She flew upstairs, calling Mr. Spiderby.

He came out into the hall, wondering at the outcry. "There is an insolent fellow downstairs; a beggar, or burglar, or what-not. I want you to put him out."

The banker took his gold-headed cane from a stand in the hall and went down into the kitchen. Katrine, eager to see the bold rascal expelled, ran after him. She stood on the lower stair, peering through the half-open door as Spiderby, cane in hand, advanced upon the intruder, who had reached the outer door, and had his back to the gentleman.

"Begone, fellow! Out of this house!"

The man wheeled about and looked the speaker in the face.

The eyes of the gentleman and the fellow met and remained fixed.

The cane, which Katrine expected to see broken over the man's shoulders, dropped from his threatening position. He appeared to have magnetized the banker, who was staring at him open-mouthed.

"No offence, sir," finally muttered the man, pulling his hat down as if he had pulled his forelock, servant-fashion. "I was only joking the girls a little. I'll take myself off without any more rumpus."

He took himself off.

Spiderby drew a long, long breath, and turned to go upstairs.

"Lock the door," he said, hoarsely, to Bridget. "Some tramp who ought to be sent to the lock-up," he remarked as he preceded Miss Bromley upstairs.

He mounted the stairs very slowly. Katrine noticed that his step was unsteady as he walked across the hall. As he opened the sitting-room door, where Mrs. Glaston still sat knitting, unconscious of the scene in the kitchen, so absorbed was she in her own reflections, he tottered on the threshold, clutched at his cravat as once before in the bank he had done, and presently sank to the floor. His fall was not violent, for he had broken it somewhat by his own endeavour to recover himself. When the two ladies reached him his face was purple, his eyes staring and set.

There was a silver water pitcher on a small table near at hand. Mrs. Glaston threw some of its contents in his face, as once he had done that service for her.

Katrine stooped and pulled off his cravat, then rang the bell for Rosa, who came down from an upper chamber where she had been sewing, and was sent for a physician.

By the time he arrived, however, Spiderby was much better. He had raised himself from the floor, and now lay back in a stuffed easy-chair.

He had recovered his speech, but looked ghastly and exhausted.

The doctor inquired minutely as to the nature of the attack.

"Too full-blooded," he said. "You must lower your diet."

Then he kindly took the banker to his hotel in his own carriage, where he ordered him some brandy, remaining with him until his patient seemed quite recovered and ready for a night's sleep.

"Apoplexy—a slight attack," muttered the physician as he drove away. "Spiderby's fine wines and hotel dinners are getting the better of him. He must diet, or 'die' without the 't,' just as he chooses. I shall warn him."

The next day he did warn him.

Spiderby did not appear so alarmed as the doctor had expected; but he promised, good-naturedly, to cut down his bill of fare.

"I know what was the matter with me better than he does," he said to himself as the doctor left him. "Such a shock might well be the death of a man—but it was not apoplexy. And I think there's no danger of my encountering another. I was a great fool to fancy what I did. 'Twas not 'a dagger that I saw before me.'"

He attempted to laugh, but the failure was a sickening one.

(To be continued.)

MOISTURE.—Moisture has been considered as a great enemy to health; and all our late investigations on the subject have pronounced on the evils of inhaling vapours even of an aqueous nature. How will men of these notions be able to combat the

oldest practice for the preservation of health—viz., early rising? The sun, first risen from his bed, spreads his effulgent calorific rays over the earth's surface and causes evaporation; it is this watery vapour, so often objected to by valetudinarians, that is so conducive to the free respiratory action; it is this, with the genial warmth of the luminary, that gives salutary influence to the circulation; not by expediting the circulation, but by the moisture and the electric rays equalizing and improving all the functions of life.

LIFE'S SHADOWS.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON arriving with his young charge at the Waterloo station in London Reuben Dennis hailed an omnibus and proceeded in it with Tessa to the Elephant and Castle, where the pair alighted, continuing their journey on foot along the New Kent Road.

The street is lined on either side with decent brick houses of two or three storeys in height, and of small size, adapted, as the advertisements say, to persons with small income. Certainly a person with a large income would have been decidedly out of place in the quiet New Kent Road, with its air of decent, aspiring poverty, and its pretension to a moderate, humble sort of respectability. The people who lived here were mainly clerks, small shopkeepers, struggling professional men, and families who eked out a meagre support by taking lodgers.

Dennis conducted Tessa to one of the most quiet, respectable houses in the street, a three-storey one, and sounded the knocker with a single, timid knock. He had a latch-key in his pocket, but he desired to meet his landlady as early as possible and enlist her interest in his young charge. He was a timid man, and his own temerity in assuming the charge of a beautiful little girl, and the wonder what the few people of his acquaintance would say to a proceeding so unprecedented, now and then nearly overwhelmed him. His desire to meet with some approval of his course had deepened into positive anxiety.

His landlady answered his knock in person. She was a tall, spare woman, with smooth hair plastered close to her cheeks, and wore a gown of coarse black, now faded to a dingy gray. She arched her fawn-coloured brows and pursed her lips primly as she saw how her lodger was accompanied.

"I have brought home a little friend with me, Mrs. Porter," explained Dennis, deprecatingly. "This is a little orphan girl whom I found in Devonshire. She was in great distress, and I have adopted her—as a niece, you know."

"Very well, sir," said Mrs. Porter, her countenance relaxing as she encountered the pleading gaze of Tessa's big gray eyes. "You can do as you like, of course, sir. She's a pretty little creature, poor dear. And an orphan? But what will Miss Stacy say to the adoption?"

Dennis blushed. His love history was well known to his prim landlady, with whom he had lodged for years, and he did not feel at all annoyed at her freedom of speech, although another might have considered it bordering upon impertinence.

"I shall go to Miss Stacy's this evening," he said, "and will take the child with me. I dare say that Miss Stacy will assume the charge of her. She should have a woman's care and kindness."

"And in the meantime I'll give the child the second pair back," said the landlady, referring to the rear chamber of her upper floor. "It's all ready for occupancy. I let it yesterday to a clerk in Newington Butts for four shillings a week, and put it in order for him, even buying a piece of druggot to lay on the bare floor before the bed; but this morning he sent word he could get lodgings cheaper over a shop in the Walworth Road, and he'd took them."

Mrs. Porter conducted Tessa to a little bare room on the topmost floor of the house, and, telling her that the front room belonged to Mr. Dennis, left her to herself.

Tessa washed her face and hands, combed out her silky, golden curls, and stood at the window, looking out upon a region of back yards, dingy back windows, and chimneys. She heard Dennis go out into the street, and a while afterward heard him return and ascend the stairs. He knocked at her door. She ran to open it.

"Come into my room, little Tessa," said Dennis, whose arms were well filled with bundles. "We'll have dinner."

Tessa needed no second invitation. She followed him into the front room—a plain, neat apartment, the floor of which was covered with a threadbare Brussels carpet that had seen its best days years before, when Mrs. Porter had kept a lodging-house at the West-end—a period in her life of which she never tired of talking. There was a cheffonier of antique pattern, having a look as if it had been bought

at an auction a half-century previous, which also dated back to the palmy period of Mrs. Porter's life. The doors of this cheffonier were lined with a faded red silk, and behind this drawing-room exterior was hidden a capacious cupboard, where Dennis stored his butter, cheese, and other prosaic necessities of humble housekeeping. A hair-cloth sofa, which served as bed at night, a set of hanging shelves laden with books, and Dennis's precious violin, made up the principal features of the remaining furniture.

Dennis deposited his bundles upon his round table, and proceeded to undo them. A small piece of butter, a quarter loaf of bread, a few ounces of coffee, a few ounces of sugar, a couple of rashers of bacon, and two or three small bundles of wood, made up the sum of his recent purchases. He proceeded to lay a bundle of wood in the grate and to light it. He filled his little coffee-pot in Mrs. Porter's kitchen with boiling water, and measured out his coffee with a teaspoon with scrupulous exactness. Setting the coffee-pot upon the hob to simmer at leisure, he put his bacon into a frying-pan produced from the cheffonier and set it to cook over the flaming wood, moving with a quiet dexterity and devotedness to his task that might have done credit to a Fracatelli.

"I can do all that next time," said Tessa, watching Dennis's operations with grave intentness. "I mean to cook for you, Uncle Reuben, and to mend your clothes. May I?"

"We'll see what Miss Agnes says," said Dennis as he snatched up his frying bacon from a greedy, lapping flame. "We'll go to see her after dinner."

Accordingly, after dinner, Dennis and little Tessa went in the direction of the Old Kent Road to the house in which the Stacys lodged.

It was a degree more meagre in appearance than Mrs. Porter's dwelling, and had more of the air of a cheap lodging-house. The ground floor was occupied by the family of a young barrister who spent his days at Lincoln's Inn, and was popularly supposed to reside "out of town." The next floor was tenanted by a family of a star actor at the Surrey Theatre. The third and topmost floor, with but three rooms, one of them a hall bed-room, was occupied by the Stacy family.

On gaining admittance into the house Dennis led Tessa up to the third floor, and knocked at the door of the front room. A low voice bade him enter. He obeyed, going into the room with his little charge.

It was a bare little parlour that of the Stacys, furnished meagrely, after the fashion of lodging-house private parlours of that grade. By one of the windows a woman sat sewing. At the other window, in an old arm-chair, busy with a copy of yesterday's *Times*, hired for a farthing from a news-dealer in the neighbouring street, sat a querulous, wrinkled, invalid old man.

The woman was Agnes Stacy. The man was her father.

Miss Stacy was some five-and-twenty years of age, not handsome, not fine-looking even, but she had a strong, patient, gentle face, from which beamed a spirit of quiet heroism, such as became a woman who was the sole support of a father and two young brothers, and whose whole life was a battle with the world for a living for these dependent ones, her only weapon a frail needle.

She looked up with a smile of welcome at her visitors, but did not lay down her work. She could not afford even one minute's rest during the day.

"Back again, Reuben?" she said. "I expected you this evening."

"I could not wait till evening, Agnes," answered Dennis. "I have need of your advice."

He introduced little Tessa to her, and narrated the occurrences of the previous day which had made him the child's guardian. Mr. Stacy laid down his paper and listened intently, looking sharply over his spectacles. Agnes also listened, now and then regarding anxious little Tessa with a kindly, reassuring smile, but not once pausing in her monotonous task of plying her needle.

"Did I do right, Agnes?" asked Dennis when the story was concluded.

"You could not have done otherwise, Reuben," declared Agnes, with a gentle heartiness that set any doubts her lover might have experienced at rest for ever.

Mr. Stacy uttered a growling sound of discontent, but did not speak.

"She is a dainty little creature," said Dennis, softly, as Tessa, with instinctive delicacy, wandered to the other side of the room and busied herself with a wood and wire puzzle. "I could not leave her in the place where I found her, in the hands of a cruel old woman, although indeed the woman talked of sending her to the union. But what am I to do with her?"

"You'd better get married at once, Dennis," muttered old Mr. Stacy, sulkily.

Agnes coloured.

"Can you not keep her, Reuben?" she asked. "She will be a great comfort to you—"

"I was thinking perhaps you might take her," said Dennis as Agnes hesitated. "I would, of course, pay for her board, and she would have the benefit of a gentleman's training—"

"She's not coming here," interposed Mr. Stacy, hastily. "I am respectable, if I am poor, and I won't have any child of doubtful birth under my care. You can be as foolish as you like, Dennis," he continued, rudely, in the harsh, dictatorial manner to which poor, patient Agnes was so well accustomed, "but you shall not draw us into your folly. Agnes has enough to do without undertaking the training of a parish waif. You'd better keep her yourself, Dennis. No doubt you are well able to gratify any fancy, however expensive. Has not some relative left you a fortune?" he inquired, with sarcastic emphasis. "But of course you've come into money. No clerk with a hundred a year would adopt a pauper."

"Hush, father! Don't talk so!" said Agnes, in a pained voice. "Reuben did well to obey the promptings of his generous heart. It costs but a trifle to keep and clothe a little girl; and who knows?" she added, her pale face flushing. "She may bring to you, Reuben, some great blessing yet. She is certainly of gentle birth. She is a lady's child."

"So much the worse for the lady!" muttered Mr. Stacy. "You can do what you please with the girl, Dennis, but she can't come here. If you think to hurry on your marriage with Agnes, so that she can take charge of your pauper, you are mistaken. Agnes's duty is first of all to her own blood. She shall not marry while I live. I won't risk being neglected for a stranger. The boys need her. They have to be educated and placed out in life, and Agnes must see to them. She promised her dying mother that she would consider us first of all as long as she lived."

"Yes, I promised," said pale Agnes, wearily.

"She doesn't deny it, you see!" said Mr. Stacy, with something of exultation. "I think, Dennis, that it would be better for you not to come here so often. Agnes cannot marry, and I don't want her mind taken off from her own flesh and blood that she owes a duty to. You'd better marry some other woman and forget her."

The lovers made no protest against the old man's selfishness. Both were well used to disappointments and self-repression. Dennis knew well that no persuasion of his would ever change Agnes's ideas of duty to her relatives, and he had resigned himself to wait for her.

"You need not advise me to marry another than Agnes, Mr. Stacy," he said, with a certain sorrowful dignity. "I love Agnes, and will wait for her a lifetime. I will put no woman between her and me. As to my coming here so often, it is the great joy of my life. If Agnes will permit me, I will come three times a week, as I have been in the habit of doing for the past five years."

"I am glad to have you come, Reuben," said Agnes, before her father could reply. "I shall expect you the same as ever. You and I cannot marry for years, and it seems selfish in me to allow any engagement between us; but I know that when I am old and faded and gray I shall yet be more to you than a younger and prettier woman could ever have been. You and I have the virtue of constancy, Reuben," and she smiled faintly.

"Perhaps," said Dennis, sighing. "I can lay up money to hire a farm after our marriage."

"A farm!" said Agnes, a sudden glow lighting up her worn, sad face. "Oh, Reuben, I should be perfectly happy on a farm! Think of the meadows, the green grass, the young lambs, the lowing cattle, the neat dairy, the brisk, stirring, independent life of a farmer! Is there a life on earth so sweet? It doesn't seem possible that I should ever be a farmer's wife!"

"Of course you will not!" said her father, testily. "You are too old, you two, to be dreaming children's dreams. How is Dennis to buy a lease of a farm, and stock it and drain it and so on, when all he has in the world is a salary of a hundred pounds a year, and he has to live out of that?"

"But I live on half my salary," said Dennis, eagerly. "And I have two hundred and fifty pounds at interest in the savings banks. In ten years more I shall have, interest and savings included, a handsome amount."

"You won't lay up any fifty pounds a-year with that child to support," growled Mr. Stacy. "You'd better pack her off to some public institution."

"If I do may Heaven forsake me!" cried Dennis.

"While I have a crust she shall share it. I will never throw her back upon the world from which I rescued her!"

Agnes bestowed upon her lover a look of tender sympathy. She had a warm heart, and was already deeply interested in little Tessa. Presently, as she bent over her work, she assured Dennis, in a low voice inaudible to Mr. Stacy, who had resumed his reading, of her entire approval of his course. Dennis exhibited to her the little embroidered dress and golden armlets that Tessa had worn years before, and the lovers agreed that there was some mystery about the child, but of what its nature might be they could not form any conception.

One thing was resolved upon between them, that Tessa was of honourable birth, the inscription on the armlets showing that her grandfather acknowledged her.

Neither Dennis nor Agnes considered the possibility that the armlets might first have belonged to another than Tessa.

It was also decided that Dennis should retain his guardianship of the child, and bestow every possible pains upon her education.

The afternoon was drawing to a close when Dennis arose to depart. Agnes kissed little Tessa with a tenderness that haunted the sensitive child long afterward, and the clerk and his small adopted niece returned to their lodgings.

Arrived in his room, Dennis summoned up Mrs. Porter and informed her of his intentions with regard to Tessa, and engaged for the child's occupancy the little back chamber, which had been already placed at her disposal.

In the course of a few days the life of Tessa had settled into its groove. She cooked Dennis's morning and evening meals—he did not return to the New Kent Road at noon—dressed his horse, and tried to patch his garments, showing a grateful zeal that surprised and delighted her protector. She watched for his return home, and was always at the street door to admit him. That dull, sallow, patient face was handsome in her eyes. She grew to love him in her earnest, childlike way with all her heart.

And Reuben grew to love her. She was like a beam of sunshine in his path. His life had been so desolate and lonely before his fateful visit to Devonshire that Tessa's presence and affection were a continued joy to him. He devoted three evenings in the week and every Sunday to her instruction. He procured school books for her use, and set her lessons to be learned during the day and recited in the evening. The child was so apt at learning that her instructor was at length compelled to study the lessons beforehand, that he might be able to conduct her recitations, and explain to her that which she did not readily understand.

Tessa was quick, energetic, and helpful. She was grateful, generous, and warm-hearted, with a passionate, noble nature whose power and strength oftentimes awed her plodding, dull-souled guardian. She was quick-witted, with a positive and unmistakable genius, and as she grew in knowledge and in years Dennis began to question what he should do with her.

As the years went on he discussed the subject often with Agnes Stacy. The lovers decided that Tessa, with her witching beauty, her innate refinement, her instinctively dainty ways, should not be taught a trade. With her peculiar bent for acquiring knowledge, and Dennis's desire that she should be sheltered from rude contact with the world, it was also decided that she should be educated for a governess.

The mother of Agnes Stacy had been a gentlewoman, with aspiring tastes and a small annuity. Mrs. Stacy had had hopes that her daughter might make a brilliant marriage, as mothers in even the humblest ranks of life sometimes venture to hope, out of the fulness of love and maternal ambition. A brilliant marriage for Agnes Stacy meant, in Mrs. Stacy's opinion, a marriage with a professional man with a good income, or with a thriving wholesale merchant, or a gentleman of good family with a small property. To fit Agnes for a lot so enviable Mrs. Stacy had placed her at a boarding-school at Clapham, which was conducted by three sisters, gentlewomen, and was attended by girls of the great middle class, daughters of landed gentry, professional men, and well-to-do tradespeople.

The three Misses Lacy were refined, intelligent, cultivated ladies, well fitted to assume the charge of a young girl and to instruct her in manners and the lighter accomplishments as well as the more solid branches of learning. Agnes Stacy opened a correspondence with them respecting Tessa, the result of which was that they agreed to receive the child, "under the circumstances," for the sum of fifty pounds per annum.

Dennis did not long deliberate about the acceptance of this offer. His salary had not advanced since his adoption of Tessa, and he dared not face the rebuking eyes of pompous Mr. Marsh with a request for an advance. He knew that such a proceeding would only be met with a prompt refusal and a tirade

upon his black ingratitude to his benefactor. The clerk's marriage with Agnes seemed as far off as ever, Mr. Stacy becoming more exacting and selfish with every day. No one but Dennis himself would suffer by his generosity, and he never thought of himself. Therefore, when Tessa had attained the age of twelve years, and was beyond her instructor in point of learning, Dennis placed her at the establishment of the Misses Lacy at Clapham to be thoroughly educated.

CHAPTER XIV.

It was a dark and stormy evening in December, some five years after the entrance of Tessa Holm into the boarding-school of the Misses Lacy at Clapham, and some nine years after the second bridal of Ignatia Redruth.

The wind was blowing in wild, chill gusts out upon the wild Devon moors; there were whirls of dead leaves in the moaning air wherever trees grew; a mist of rain was falling thickly, and the sky was black with gloom.

The hour was late, and the little wayside inn of the "Pig and Thistle" had long since been closed to the rude labourers who were wont to frequent it. The windows were barred with their rude wooden shutters, and through knot holes and crevices a faint light struggled out from the tap-room into the outer world of storm and darkness.

In the quiet tap-room, perched upon a tall stool behind her high desk, and all alone, sat old Mrs. Kiggs. Her few wisps of yellow-white hair were drawn away from her bony forehead, and her keen eyes, looking through steel-rimmed spectacles, were busy with the day's accounts. The lapse of years had not improved her appearance. Her long, hooked nose was more like a parrot's beak than ever. Her chin was even more pointed and upturned than of old, and nose and chin seemed actually to meet. She looked, in fact, more than ever like a fabled witch, and she had a weird, uncanny air that would have startled a superstitious person or one given to reading old legends.

Cold as was the night, the fire on the broad hearth, around which the evening's guests had sat, had died out, leaving only a few embers gleaming from the ashes. The miserly old woman would have been horrified at the thought of heaping on a few coals for her own comfort.

She made her entries in a sheep-skin covered book, counted her actual cash gains, then, looking both money and book in her desk, pushed away the lamp, and, leaning her cheek on her hand, fell to muttering, as was her habit when alone.

"I never did so good a business as I'm doing this year," she said, in a low, cracked voice. "The two shillings I sent to London for the little book of recipes for making wine and brandy and cider, without a particle of wine, brandy, or cider in them, is worth a fortune to me. None of my customers suspect that I impose water upon them coloured and flavoured with drugs and acids. Still, I had better be careful and not overdo the matter. I must keep up my order for cider, or I shall be suspected. This has been a prosperous year. If only Captain Holm had sent his allowance of money as usual, I should have felt like a rich woman. Why did he not send it? Can he suspect that I have been imposing upon him for the past five years, sending reports about the child and so on, when I don't know whether she is dead or alive?"

She meditated, contracting her brows until her forehead was puckered into innumerable folds and wrinkles.

"He can't suspect the imposture I've practised on him," she said, presently, with a long breath of relief. "He knows no one in this neighbourhood. He is not friendly with his own people, and it's a good many years since he was in England. He's simply out of money, or else he's dead. I hope he is dead."

She started as a sudden gust of wind shook the shutters and window-sash. As the wind swept by over the wild moors, and a comparative calm succeeded, a knock, loud, startling, and imperative, sounded suddenly upon the door.

Mrs. Kiggs gave a frightened cry, and with a ghastly face and chattering teeth clambered down from her high stool and beat a precipitate retreat to the door of the inner room. Her impulse was to summon her stout-handed serving-maid, her first thought being of robbers.

At the threshold she halted and looked back over her shoulder, her reason asserting itself, and suggesting that the person demanding admittance might be a belated wayfarer who would have means to pay liberally for a night's lodging.

While she was deliberating the knock was repeated, even more loudly and imperatively.

"Who is there?" asked the old woman, in a high, quavering voice.

"A traveller," was the response from without. "Open the door and give me shelter."

Still the old woman hesitated. The thought occurred to her that the traveller might be some wayfarer who had heard of her reputation for miserliness, and had come to rob her.

"Are you going to open?" demanded the traveller, peremptorily. "Open, I say, or I'll break your door in!"

Something in the voice struck the old woman as familiar.

"Tell me your name," she quavered. "If you are an honest man, tell me your name."

There was a moment's delay, as if the person without did not care to trust his name to the wild night winds. Then, as a pause came in the storm, a fierce, sibilant whisper came hissing through the capacious key-hole, bearing the words:

"I am Tessa's father!"

Granny Kiggs staggered and leaned back against the door-post, in a panic of fear and consternation. Then she tottered across the floor and undid the heavy bolts and bars, moving slowly and heavily.

The last chain was scarcely loosened when the door was swung open by an impatient hand, and a tall man closely wrapped in a dripping cloak, and wearing a hat drawn down over his eyes, stalked into the lonely, chilly tap-room.

The keen-eyed old woman could not discern his features, but she shivered as she felt a basilisk gaze fixed upon her. She shot a single bolt to secure the door—her caution predominant even then—and tottered back towards a chair, dropping heavily upon it.

"You didn't expect me, eh?" asked the intruder, in a sardonic voice. "I have surprised you, I see. Did you fear robbers, my miserly dame? Or are you overcome with joy?"

"Are—are you Captain Holm?" stammered the old woman, feebly.

The intruder laughed softly. Then he flung off his dripping cloak, threw aside his slouched hat, and stood before her with his face revealed in the glowing lamp-light.

It had been fourteen years since Mrs. Kiggs had seen him, and time had changed him as it changes all, but the old woman recognized him at once.

He was indeed Captain Holm.

He was not so slender or graceful as in the old days when Ignatia Redruth had been his wife. He had grown heavier, although he was not yet portly. His face, that had been so Apollo-like, had become, with years of dissipation, more like the face of a satyr. It wore a flush that seemed habitual to it; the cheeks were flabby and bloated; the eyes, that had once been famed for their power of expression, were lustreless, save when some sudden excitement lent them a temporary fire. One could readily see that the man had once been extraordinarily handsome, and as the scent of the rose hangs about the ruined vase so a faint remnant of his former beauty still clung to him.

But what his face had lost in bloom and fine outlines it had gained in power, although that power was evil. The light in his eyes was sinister; the smile that came the readiest to his lips was sardonic and mocking. He looked like one who would scruple at nothing, who regards the world as his football, and all men either his enemies or the instruments of his will. He was the impersonation of a wicked daring, of a cruel and remorseless nature.

"How you have changed, captain!" exclaimed the old woman, involuntarily.

"And not for the better, your looks say!" said the captain, sneeringly.

"No, not for the better!" muttered Mrs. Kiggs. "Law! when I was servant in your father's house, Mr. Digby, and you were only a lad of eighteen or so, you were as handsome as an angel! Who could have foretold such a change?"

"You imply that I am not very handsome now," remarked Captain Holm, coolly. "What did you expect, Granny Kiggs?" and he settled himself easily into the nearest chair. "I have been knocking about the world for a good many years. I have been captain in Her Majesty's service, but I sold my commission about a year after an accident on Lake Ontario that nearly cost me my life twice over—once by drowning, and once by fever consequent upon my exposure. I have been explorer in America, trader in Canada, gambler on the Mississippi, and many things else not worth while to speak of. Such experiences would change any man. It is fourteen years since I went away."

"When did you get back?" asked Mrs. Kiggs.

"To-day. I landed at Liverpool this morning. My first visit in England is to you. I came to Exeter by train, and drove to Moreton Hampstead in a dog-cart. I have walked the remainder of the distance, and more than once thought I should never get to my journey's end. You can hardly imagine my impatience to reach the 'Pig and Thistle.'"

The old woman coughed to hide her tremor. Her complexion turned a sickly yellow.

"Haven't you been home, sir?" she asked, stammering.

"Didn't I tell you that I came to Exeter direct from Liverpool?" demanded Captain Holm, looking at her sharply. "I have seen no one I knew since I set foot upon the English shores. With the exception of your letters I have not personally heard from England for six or eight years. Of some persons of whom I am most anxious to hear, and a sudden deadly look shot from his eyes, 'I have not heard for ten years. My own relatives discarded me anew, and for all time they said, some six years since. They have not written me a line since then. Do you know anything of them?'"

"Nothing," said Granny Kiggs, falteringly. "Only I wonder you should have come here first of all, after being away fourteen years."

"You need not wonder. I have sent you so many injunctions about the child that you should know by this time that earth holds for me no treasure like the one I left in your care," said Captain Holm, his eyes glittering. "Often, in the wilds of Canada, or in the most reckless gambling scenes upon the Mississippi, or on the binnacle, I have thought of the child with an unutterable impatience and longing. The thought of her was a shield to me in battle. I have endured hunger and thirst, nerved by the thought that she was here and I must return to her. Oh, the joy of knowing that she was here!"

Mrs. Kiggs was awed.

"You loved her so then?" she faltered. "I wouldn't have believed it. You never seemed to love her."

"Love her!" repeated Holm, hoarsely, a sudden lightning gleam leaping from his eyes, a white heat glowing from his face. "Love her? The child I never saw but once after her earliest infancy; who shrank from me as from a leper; who has her mother's face; who was or would have been trained to hate me? Love her? No! A thousand times no!"

"But—but you do not hate her—your own flesh and blood?" said the old woman, feebly.

"What do I care for my own flesh and blood?" cried Captain Holm, with a fierce, scornful laugh. "I have had my own will through life, and it is my law. I broke my mother's heart, and she died six years ago, my name the last on her lips. Sitting by the side of her coffin, looking upon her hairs gray before their time, and upon her face smeared with wrinkles, my father wrote me that letter cutting me off from his friendship and estates. Unless my brothers die without issue, and I am then heir-at-law, I shall never get a penny of the Holm property. But if you suppose I shed one tear over that old man's tear-blistered letter, you do not know Digby Holm. I have no weaknesses of the affections. The past is dead, and I would not recall it if I could. My path is strewn with dead, to speak poetically, and again he laughed fiercely, "but I have not cared for it. I have lived for but one object—have schemed with but one hope," and his voice sank to a hissing whisper. "That object and that hope were—revenge!"

"Revenge!" echoed Mrs. Kiggs, shrinking from him. The face of the returned wanderer glowed stormily.

"Yes," he said, still in that fierce, hissing voice. "I have lived for revenge. It seems as if, now that I stand at last upon the threshold of success, that my soul is on fire. I loved a woman once—I love her still. If she be living, I will wring her heart through her child. I have come back poor, but she shall enrich me. She shall be a mine of wealth to me. But why do I speak of all this to you? My excitement deprives me of my usual sense and caution, I think. The child—tell me of her. She lives? She is well?"

The miserly old woman trembled like a leaf in the wind. Her face grew even yellower in its sickly hue.

"Yes—she lives!" she faltered.

"You have sent me yearly reports of her appearance, disposition, and character," said Holm, gazing at Mrs. Kiggs with a glance that seemed to her full of suspicion. "I have come here expecting to find an ignorant, uneducated, coarse-faced rustic lass. That is what I desired her to be. I should like to present such a girl to her aristocratic, high-bred—Call up the girl!" he added, checking himself abruptly. "I want to see her."

"I—I can't!" said Mrs. Kiggs, in a whining voice. "It is so late—"

"Call her up, I say. The hour has nothing to do with it."

"I can't—I can't!" wailed the miserable old woman, in deadly affliction.

Holm took a step nearer to her, his face aflame, an ugly smile on his lips.

"Have you lied to me?" he asked, in a terrible voice. "Is the girl dead?"

"Oh, I don't know," moaned the miserly old creature, putting up both hands as if to protect herself.

"It's all your own fault, captain. If you had sent the money as usual I shouldn't have let her go. But you didn't send it that year, and I thought you were dead. It cost so much to take care of her—you've no idea! She used to eat so much, too, and her clothes cost a sight. I let her go because I didn't feel able to support her—"

Captain Holm interrupted her by the utterance of an oath so terrible as to elicit from her a shriek of terror.

"Witch!" he ejaculated. "The girl is gone! How long has she been gone?"

"Since the year you forgot to send the money for her at the usual time," whined Mrs. Kiggs. "Nine years."

"Nine years!" almost shouted Captain Holm. "Then all your letters concerning her were base fabrications? Then you took my money for her support without earning it? You have cheated and lied to me. Where is she?"

"In London," gasped Mrs. Kiggs, almost beside herself with fear.

"With whom is she?"

"A poor clerk, who stopped here as he was passing one day and fell in love with her beautiful face. He wanted to adopt her, and gave me five pounds for the clothes she had on when she came to me."

Mrs. Kiggs trembled at the torrent of oaths that came from Captain Holm's lips. He glared at the wretched innkeeper as if he would kill her, and his fingers bent and unbent themselves with a nervous frenzy as if eager to clutch her throat.

"You sold her very clothes, so that they could identify her?" he said, hoarsely. "Go on. Who is this clerk? You took his address?"

"I asked him for his address, and he gave me a card which I looked at after he had gone. It proved to be the address card of an inn he had stopped at in Plymouth. Oh, Mr. Digby, don't glare at me so! It's all done and can't be undone! You are not so good that you can afford to kill me. I see murder in your eyes—"

"Idiot!" sneered Captain Holm. "Do you think I would endanger the success of all my plans by staining my hands with your miserable blood? Have you no clue to this London clerk? What was his name?"

"I never knew his name. I have no clue to him. He came and went and took little Tess with him, and I've never seen or heard of either of them since. I suppose he was married and wanted her for a servant."

"It's more likely that he was some spy, or detective, or emissary of the Redruths," muttered Captain Holm, in a tone too low for the old woman's ears. "And the girl is gone! I am balked at the very outset!"

He scowled blackly, looking the incarnation of rage. "Is there anything more to tell me?" he asked, abruptly, after some reflection.

"Nothing more," was the frightened reply. "I presume the girl is in London, the ignorant drudge of that poor clerk's household. It must be easy to find her to a man of your shrewdness."

"You don't even know what manner of clerk he was—whether banker's, merchant's, or grocer's clerk?"

Granny Kiggs shook her head.

"I will defer my settlement with you," said Captain Holm, hoarsely. "For the present I must direct myself to the task of finding the girl. I shall, however, be likely to bear in mind your hypocrisy and lies."

He lifted his long, dripping cloak, and adjusted it about his person. He picked up his hat, and drew it down again over his brows, then, without another word to the terror-stricken Mrs. Kiggs, he opened the door and stalked out again into the storm and the darkness.

At a little distance from the small inn he made a momentary halt and looked back, shaking his clenched fist at the building. Then, folding his cloak closer, he breasted the storm, muttering, darkly:

"It is my impression that the 'clerk' who took Tess away was a detective or person in the employ of the Redruths. While I have been away, and cherishing my schemes, Ignatia may have had possession of the child. The girl may be educated, accomplished, and an acknowledged heiress. By Heaven! there's murder in my heart to-night! The girl is my daughter, and I'll have her back if I have to scour the world to find her. From this moment I devote myself to the search for her. I think she is with her mother, and my first movement shall be to find out the whereabouts of Ignatia Redruth, and to visit her!"

(To be continued.)

PROPOSED STATUES.—There is some talk of doing something for art even in this country, albeit we are so unfortunate as to have Mr. Ayrton for scidile.

Subscriptions are to be asked for statues of our eminent politicians, e.g., the late Sir Robert Peel, Lord Palmerston, and Lord Derby, which will be erected in Parliament Square, opposite New Palace Yard.

CURIOUS DISCOVERY.—Mr. W. J. Stracey, of Brixton Viarage, Norwich, ventilates a curious idea with regard to scarlet fever. He says that "cases of fever, especially of scarlet fever, are apt to break out in newly built houses about eight or nine months after the same have been completed. This is said to arise from a decomposition which takes place in the hair used in the mortar or plaster of the walls through the action of lime. And it does appear to me that if this is found to be a common occurrence, and very nearly at the very same period after completion, many families, if they were aware of this fact, might be able to remove for some weeks so as exactly to avoid this risk."

A YOUTHFUL INVENTOR.—A lad in the Royal Navy, named Falkner, has invented a four-gun battery with shield in front for the protection of the gunner, and by the good offices of a naval lord has obtained his discharge, and been enabled to submit his invention to the Select Committee at Woolwich. His models, however, are now before the United Service Institution, and will be carefully examined before the officers who represent the Government decide upon their merits. It does not follow, however, because inquiry is ordered that there is anything either of value or novelty in the idea, for hundreds of inventions are sent in every year to the War Department, some of which are of the most ridiculous character; but in every case a report has to be made by the officers of the Select Committee.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.—A despatch of the Earl of Kimberley, announcing the Queen's assent to the Act legalizing marriage with a deceased wife's sister in South Australia, has been published in the Adelaide papers. It says:—"Her Majesty's Government have given this Bill their careful consideration, and, looking to the fact that a Bill nearly similar to this has passed the Colonial Legislature five times, and that this particular Bill was passed by both Houses almost without opposition, and with other circumstances indicating a strong feeling in its favour, they are of opinion that it would not be right to resist farther the wishes of the colony so clearly and repeatedly expressed. I have therefore felt it my duty to advise Her Majesty to assent to this Bill, and I enclose an order of Her Majesty in Council giving effect to my recommendation."

PRESENT TO THE PRINCESS LOUISE.—It will probably be remembered that the 91st Regiment was elected to be the guard of honour on the occasion of the marriage of the Princess Louise to the Marquis of Lorne. The selection was most appropriate, inasmuch as the regiment was raised in the year 1794 by the grandfather of the marquis. Amongst the numerous presents made to the bride not the least appreciated were those of the officers and non-commissioned officers of the Argyleshire Regiment. The soldiers of the regiment, not to be outdone by their superiors, have also determined to offer a gift for the acceptance of the princess, and in a few days a deputation of their body will take the presentation. The gift is a biscuit-basket in the shape of a drum, and of pure silver, except being mounted on Scotch oak. It is supported by four silver pillars or pedestals. The lid is in the form of a drum's head, a silver cord on the top forming a handle. Its front displays all the honours of the 91st Regiment, viz., Roleia, Vimiera, Corunna, Pyrenees, Nivelle, Nive, Orthes, Toulouse, and Peninsula. It bears the following inscription:—"Presented to her Royal Highness the Princess Louise on her marriage with the Marquis of Lorne, March 18, 1871."

FOUNDATION OF HARVARD COLLEGE.—Information has recently come to light, by which it appears that the impulse for the foundation of Harvard College was given by a woman. Lucy Downing, sister of John Winthrop, first Governor of Massachusetts, was not unwilling herself to remove to New England, but she was unwilling that her son George should be unable to be well educated there. In 1636 she therefore wrote to her brother from England, soliciting that the boy be allowed to remain in England until he had finished his studies, or means be afforded for his perfecting himself in them in Massachusetts; adding that the news of suitable provision for this purpose "would make her go far nimbler to New England, if Heaven should call her to it, than otherwise she should; and she believed a college would put no small life into the plantation." In October of that same year, 1636, at a meeting of the General Court of the Massachusetts Colony, it was agreed "to give four hundred pounds towards a school or college"—so readily did the general court answer the suggestion of this brilliant woman. Her son George was, in fact, one of the first nine graduates of Harvard in 1642, went to England, and became the minister of the Commonwealth to Holland.

Independence.

Written by CHARLES SWAIN.

Andante espres.

PIANO. *fp* *poco. cres.*

Ye speak of In - de - pen - dence— There's no such thing on
The seed of friend - ship blows not— No leaf can it im -

earth; We de - pend up - on each o - ther Still for all that life is worth. To
- part— Un - til it finds a wel - come In some con - ge - nial heart. The

ev - 'ry mind that pon - dera— To ev' - ry heart that feels,... There's not a day but
light of love can warm not, Till found some kin - dred shrine;.. And then it springs im -

ad lib.
something new This hid - den truth re - veals....
mor - tal, And shows it - self di - vine....

colla parte. *f* *R.G.*

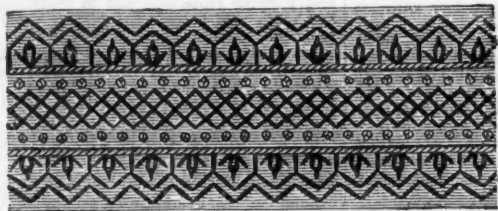
'Tis thus throughout creation
The links of life have birth;
Ye speak of Independence—
There's no such thing on earth;
We depend on one another
For each comfort we enjoy;
There's naught the heart can foster,
That the heart cannot destroy.

We depend for our existence
On His hand who gave us breath,
We depend upon affection,
E'en to soothe the hour of death.
Thus, thus throughout creation
The links of life had birth;
Ye speak of Independence—
There's no such thing on earth.

BORDER IN POINT RUSSE, DIAMOND PATTERN IN TATTING, TABLET FOR A PHYSICIAN, &c., &c.

BORDER IN POINT RUSSE.—No. 1.

This consists of green cloth embroidered in gold silk (see illustration).



BORDER IN POINT RUSSE.—No. 1.

DIAMOND PATTERN IN TATTING.—No. 2.

Four designs constitute this pattern; they are united by closed loops and lace stitch. The number of double knots is indicated by the illustration.

TABLET FOR A PHYSICIAN.—Nos. 3 & 4.

Showing how to work it in full size.

(Continued from our last.)

PART of the work is executed in Russian stitch.

Instead of this design pattern No. 4 can be worked in like manner. In place of the richly carved wood described at the beginning of this explanation a much simpler may be employed; and in case this should be too narrow for the rim of the tablet described the foundation of the embroidery may be cut so as to suit the plainer and consequently cheaper wood.

FASHIONS.

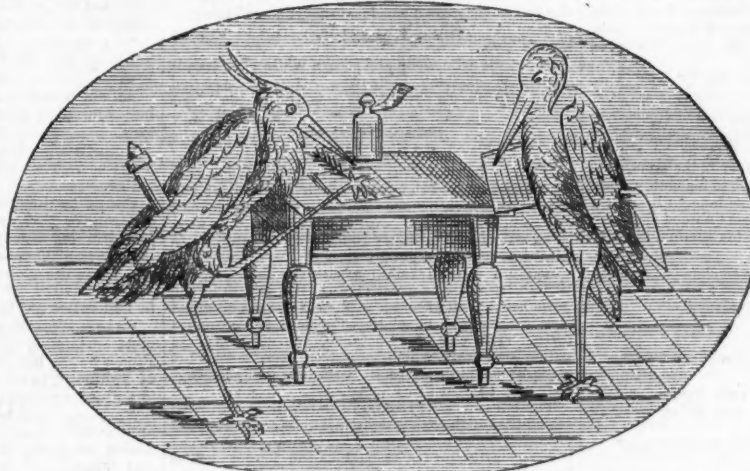
It may be laid down as a general rule, without exception, that everything loose-fitting, whether in dresses or wrappings, is alike becoming to women who are too stout or too thin, as it conceals both defects. Short over skirts make stout figures look stouter and thin figures look thinner, and should therefore be worn only by those of medium size. White, light écar, and light gray make persons look thicker; they are consequently suited to slender ladies, and should be avoided by those who are robust. Perpendicular stripes make one look thin, and horizontal stripes stout; they should therefore be chosen according to the figure. There are also many prejudices with respect to colour which should be combated. It is generally thought that yellow is becoming to brunettes, and that the latter should avoid lilac, which is only suited to blondes. This is a mistake; yellow is suited only to fair brunettes and is very unbecoming to those of a brown complexion, while lilac suits all complexions, even brown and yellow. The Parisian ladies know all these little secrets by instinct; they would probably be very much puzzled to analyze them, but they admirably understand how to put them in practice, to choose what suits them in the prevailing fashions, to avoid what is unbecoming, and even to make the most of what they have by transforming it in such a manner as to be always in vogue.

A number of fancy wrappings are in preparation for the watering-places and the seashore. These are mostly of white cashmere, and are large slashed paletots with very full sleeves. The trimming is composed of rich embroidery richly executed with silk twist of the bright colours used for the patterns designated in Paris as cashmere designs. Silk fringe corresponding in colour to the embroidery, cords, and tassels, complete the trimming; the latter are tied behind over the belt. These wrappings are worn with all

kinds of dresses when the temperature renders an extra wrapping necessary. Much simpler wrappings are made for the same purpose of white cloth, embroidered with brown or black braid. These are loose paletots, hooded talmas, or else plain short talmas without hoods. In the latter case the bottom of the talma is hollowed out in the back so as to form an arch, and a pointed or square hood is usually simulated with braid.

White muslin dresses are much worn; these are made with an over skirt either falling straight or looped. They are generally very simple, being trimmed with pleated flounces of the same muslin, though some are elaborately striped and trimmed with lace or guipure insertion and edging. One of these dresses, designed for a youthful

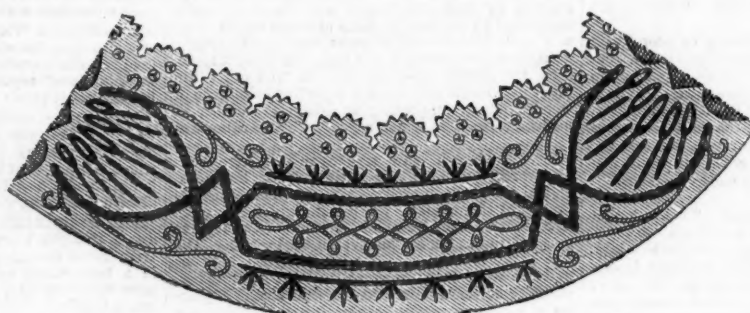
bride, consists of an apple green silk skirt with low waist and short sleeves, over which is worn a white muslin skirt composed alternately of a strip of muslin two inches wide and Valenciennes insertion half an inch wide, trimmed with a deep flounce of plain muslin, bordered with Valenciennes insertion and edging each an inch wide; tunic of plain white muslin, bordered with Valenciennes insertion and wide edging, looped in the back with a large bow of apple



SHOWING HOW TO WORK THE CENTRE OF TABLET IN FULL SIZE.—No. 3.

green ribbon, which fastens the bottom of the tunic to the bottom of the high-necked muslin waist trimmed with lace and insertion, which is worn over the silk one.

The silks in preparation at the Lyons factories are all in brown shades, from the darkest to the lightest. The newest brown is tinged with red, and called the tiger. It closely resembles the old Bismarck shade. Glacé silks will be much worn during the season. Passementerie seems destined to go out of fashion;

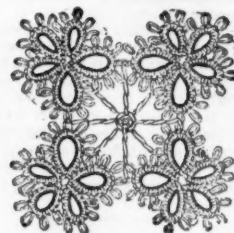


BORDER OF TABLET.—No. 4.

the trimmings most in favour will be made of the material of the dress. For wrappings silk embroidery and braiding will take the lead of passementerie trimmings.

For summer dresses muslin and écar linen continue in favour. They are not trimmed with bands and folds as much as last season, but rather embroidered with white or maroon, and a very few with brown soutache.

Large Scotch plaid shawls are taking the place of the waterproof cloaks, which are convenient, we admit, but so ugly and ungraceful that we part with them without a sigh. The plaid shawls are brown and black, black and white, and green and dark blue. They are just as impermeable as waterproof and are less sombre. They are in the shape of long circulars,



DIAMOND PATTERN IN TATTING.—No. 2.

with collars trimmed with fringe, and cover the dress entirely. They are rolled up and carried in a strap like the old-fashioned waterproof.

Garments of braided cashmere will be a feature in autumn attire, and ladies devote their leisure to ornamenting them. Polonaises and the Watteau mantle, with either one cape or two, are the first choice in shape, though many ladies adhere to the négligé paletot, making it closer fitting, however, than those of last winter. The garment is cut by a modiste, and the pattern for braiding is stamped upon each piece separately, that it may be braided before it is made up into a large, unwieldy garment. Narrowest soutache of finest silk is used for braiding, and the design is so close that when finished it looks like very rich embroidery. Fern leaves and a Greek border are the favourite designs. Gray cashmere is braided with darker gray, light brown with nut brown, black with black, except for house jackets, when the jardinière braids of many colours are used.

Black lace mittens are said to be coming into fashion again, and are already seen on the promenade. They display a fair hand to advantage, and are certainly far more comfortable than kid gloves for midsummer wear. They can be bought very reasonably at present, but will be far more expensive next season.

Another revival, pleasant at this writing, is the close, high way of arranging the hair that has been adopted by many ladies of fashion. Instead of châteline braids drooping low on the neck, hair-dressers make the old-fashioned French twist high on the back of the head, and coil braids of three-plaited tresses round it. A braided coronet passes over the front. This gives the head a classic shape, and is cooler and more cleanly than the châteline.

A new hat, called the Roland, is masculine-looking but stylish. It is of straw, with a high, square crown shaped like the beavers worn with riding habits. The rolling brim curves slightly in front and back. Black velvet and an ostrich feather are the trimmings.

Some innovations in costumes are announced by foreign correspondents. The corsage and skirt of dresses are of striped fabrics, with sleeves and over skirt of solid colour. Again, the entire basque and skirt are of silk,

the over skirt and mantlet of striped leno. Basques are also made of a material quite different from the rest of the costume; for example, a skirt and over skirt of pearl gray cashmere with a basque of claret-coloured gros grain. Evening dresses are also made with badices of a colour in contrast with the skirt. Pink gros grain basques are worn with black Chambéry gauze skirts, and turquoise blue silk basques

with white muslin skirts. The effect is said to be very pretty. The basques are not low necked, but are cut square and open in front, and are trimmed with a fringed-out silk ruche and a tulle ruche inside.

The Gabrielle polonaise, fitting the waist perfectly, and very full in the skirt, yet with waist and skirt cut in one, is the fashionable over dress described by foreign correspondents. These differ but little from the Marguerite polonaise worn here. The edge of the garment is very little trimmed, having a double piping of thick cable cord or else a bias silk band for border. If a richer garment is desired, a basque is outlined by lace and passementerie. Bias bands of striped stuff, darker than the dress, are used for trimming suits. Cashmere skirts, to be worn with a variety of over dresses, are of solid colour, and are no longer trimmed with flounces, but with many bias bands corded at each edge. Over skirts made abroad are straight all round, without looping behind or on the sides.

THE REASON WHY.

"No, Lucy, never make a love match," said young Mrs. Strong to an old school friend who was paying her an afternoon visit. "Marry for money—for interest—for anything but love. I have tried that, and made a failure such as it would break my heart to see you make."

Lucy Moore listened silently, a thoughtful shadow on her fair young face.

"Is it indeed so?" she said. "I grieve to hear it. How well I remember your wedding-day, Mary. How handsome and noble your husband looked! How bright and happy you were! Oh, surely he loved you very dearly then?"

"He thought he did, and so did I," said Mrs. Strong, with a half-checked sob. "But it did not last long, Lucy. We have been married just two years to-day. He will not remember the day. He left me this morning without a kiss, as he always does. He will come back to dinner in the same way, and after it is over he will go out to his club, or—some other place, and never come home till after I have gone to bed. Yet I have been a good and careful wife to him. I have studied his comfort in every way, and this is my reward!"

She hid her face in her hands as she spoke. Lucy Moore bent over her and whispered:

"In every way save one, dear Mary."

Mrs. Strong looked up.

"What do you mean?"

"Promise not to be angry and I will tell you."

"Go on."

"Your husband used to be very fond of music. Do you ever play or sing to him of an evening now?"

"Oh, no. We gave that up long enough ago."

"But why?"

"I'm sure I can't tell. It was such a bore to practice."

"Do you read aloud to him, or have him read to you?"

"No. I used to; but somehow that is given up too."

"And your dress; shall you change it before he comes home to dinner?"

Mrs. Strong shook her head. She wore a dingy flounced delaine, no collar or cuffs, and her hair was rough and untidy—her whole look one of extreme carelessness.

"He would not notice it if I did. Where is the use, Lucy? It is all too late."

"No, it is not too late. But it may be soon," said Lucy, earnestly. "Mary, some one ought to tell you. No one dares to but me. Your husband does not go to his club of an evening. He goes to Mrs. Wylie's. You know her; you have heard her name in society. 'The Queen of Flirts.' Mary, she is a dangerous woman. She lives but for admiration, and that she means to have. Your husband gives her admiration now; take care that he gives no more—his love!"

Mrs. Strong burst into tears.

"What can I do?" she wailed. "I know that woman too well. What chance have I against her?"

"Give yourself a chance," said Lucy, with a kiss. "Let your husband find a pleasant welcome from a wife neatly dressed, Mary. Forgive the hint. You have beauty and grace. Do not neglect them longer. Sing to him, Mary; play to him; charm and fascinate him. You have done it once. Try again, and save him from the 'Queen of Flirts.'"

She stole softly from the room. It had not been a pleasant lesson to receive; it might not have been a pleasant one to give—who shall say? But Mrs. Strong was a sensible as well as a pretty woman, and five minutes after Lucy Moore had gone she went up to her own room, acknowledging that her friend had spoken but the truth.

That evening, just after the street lamps were

lighted, Mr. Strong came carelessly towards his home. Carelessly? Yes, that was the word. That house was fast becoming to him only a place to eat, sleep, and dress in—a place for which he had to pay rent and taxes, but in which he took no comfort or pleasure, if the truth must be told.

"Never mind; I'll go to Grace as soon as dinner is over and she will make it up to me," thought Mr. Strong as he opened the front door with his latch-key and strode across the hall.

Only half-way, however, for there before him, at the foot of the stairs, stood a graceful, pretty woman, with satin-smooth brown hair, bright blue eyes, and cheeks as red as roses, wearing a pretty evening dress of dark-blue silk, and shining ornaments upon her snowy neck and arms.

"Welcome home, dear James!" she said, with a heavenly smile. "It is the second anniversary of our wedding-day. Won't you spend this evening with me, dear?"

His only answer was a close embrace and a sudden kiss. His eyes were dim as he sped upstairs to his own room to prepare for dinner.

"Brute that I have been!" he thought to himself.

After dinner, on the plea of smoking one cigar, he stole out, and returned with a pretty gold watch and chain as a present for his wife. They sang the old songs together that evening; they talked a long time over the dying fire. Ah, it was not too late. He loved her still, and she had saved him and their happy home.

The lesson was not lost upon her. From that day she has never grown careless—never ceased to strive to keep her husband's as she once tried to win her lover's love.

Oh, wives who weep and mourn while your truant husbands seek some fascinating "Grace," have you fallen into Mary's error? Is this the reason why? M. W. S. G.

THE BANYAN.

WHEN a banyan tree first springs up from seed its method of growth is very much like that of the trees with which we are familiar at home—the oak or beech, for example. Nor does it begin to do anything out of the ordinary routine of vegetable life till it has reached a goodly size.

Readers are all familiar with the fact that our British trees vary a great deal in the length of the branches which proceed from the parent stem, as also in the angle at which they send the branches forth. The oak, for instance, has what may be called long arms, which, moreover, leave the parent stem at so high an angle that, speaking loosely, they may be said to be horizontal.

The banyan tree of India has a length of arm with which that of the oak is not at all to be compared, the direction being almost quite horizontal. But on the ordinary principles of mechanics the longer such a branch is the greater the lever power which it exerts, and this tends to break it off from the parent stem, so that a length of arm much exceeding that of the oak is impossible, unless some provision exists for giving it adequate support.

The peculiarity of the banyan tree is that there is such a provision. When a horizontal branch has been put forth to such a length as to render it difficult to maintain itself without breaking, it lowers down from its end one or more roots, which, entering the ground, send forth rootlets, and themselves become new stems. In due time the long horizontal branches which once were in danger of being destroyed by their own weight are almost as easily supported by the woody pillars at either end of them as a chain bridge is on its piers, and no catastrophe is likely to occur even if new branches be sent forth.

So the process goes on, and on, and on, till in place of a single tree there is a perfect colonnade of wooden stems supporting an adequate number of natural rafters, on which reposes a dense canopy of foliage.

Dr. Roxburgh saw a banyan fully five hundred yards round the extremities of the branches, and about one hundred feet high. The principal branch of this monster was about eight feet or more in diameter, and rose to an elevation of twenty-five feet before coming to the level of the branches. The size of the colossal banyan now described may be understood if it be remembered that five hundred yards or fifteen hundred feet are more than a quarter of a mile—a pretty respectable circuit for the branches of one tree.

But a more notable one still has long been known—that which was described with admirable minuteness and fidelity by Mr. James Forbes in his letters written from the East and published in his valuable "Oriental Memoirs," sent forth in 1813. It has a native name, Cubber Burr, given it after a celebrated saint. Was this the well-known Hindoo reformer Kabir or Kubbear from whom the sect of the Kabir Panthis took its origin? It grows about twelve miles from the town of Broach, on one of the banks

of the Nerbudda river. Its circumference, when Mr. Forbes used to encamp with picnic and other parties under it, was nearly two thousand feet measured round the principal stems. The overhanging branches covered a much larger space. The large trunks numbered about three hundred and fifty, and smaller ones exceeded three thousand, each of these, be it remembered, continuing still to send forth branches and hanging roots, designed to fix themselves in the earth and become the parents of a future progeny.

Mr. Forbes says that this celebrated tree was once much larger, but that a fearful storm, attended by a sudden and high flood on the Nerbudda (occurring of course previously to the letter on which this information is given, dated January 1783), greatly diminished its glories, having carried away many of its trunks, thus reducing their number from more than 1,350 to the three hundred and fifty existing now. Birds, snakes, and monkeys abound in the overhanging canopy of branches and foliage, the last-named animals amusing with their antics the European and native travellers encamped below.

FACETIÆ.

IN EXTREMIS.—That man is indeed hard up who cannot get credit even for good intentions.—Punch.

WHEN a man gets so low that he will not even borrow trouble his case is desperate.

THE fellow who called tight boots comfortable defended his position by saying they made a man forget all his other miseries.

"PA, what can I do unless you got me a riding habit up here in the country?" "Get into the habit of walking, my dear."

AN old bachelor says that during leap-year the ladies jump at every offer of marriage—hence the term.

PEOPLE who fish for compliments do not need long lines. They will get their best bites in shallow water.

FOLLY to think that you can make pork out of pig-iron, or that you can become a shoemaker by just drinking sherry cobbler.

RAINING WIT.—At an auction of miscellaneous articles in the open air it began to rain, when a bystander advised the auctioneer that the next article he had better put up should be an umbrella.

PRACTICAL.—Measures are being taken to promote swimming in our army. Very right. But Punch would be almost as glad to observe a habit of swimming in our navy.—Punch.

A CORRESPONDENT of an agricultural paper asks: "Where can wool be profitably grown?" We are of opinion that there is no place where it can more profitably be grown than on the back of a sheep.

O TEMPORA!—It is reported that a street in Peoria, which was known last year as "Turtle Dove Road," otherwise "Honeymoon Terrace," has had its name changed to "Nursery Row."

A STITCH IN TIME.—On hearing the report that the shocking condition of the firemen's hose had resulted in the destruction of a large amount of property, a woman sat up all night darning her husband's stockings.

AN INFANTILE SIMILE.—A little girl of five summers was severely stung by a hornet, and, running into the house, she told her mother that she had been bitten by something that looked like "a yellow carriage with the top turned back."

THE REASON WHY.—"Why do you set your cup of coffee upon the chair, Mr. Jones?" said a worthy landlady one morning at breakfast. "It is so very weak, ma'am," replied Jones, demurely, "I thought I would let it take a rest."

MENTAL OBLIQUITY.—An unreasonable and somewhat misanthropic acquaintance remarks that he has often heard the proverb "A friend in need is a friend indeed," but he says he can't see where the laugh comes in. He has a friend in need who is always borrowing money of him.

EXTRAORDINARY ACQUAINTANCE.—"I was not aware that you knew him," said Tom Smith to an Irish friend the other day. "Knew him," said he, in a tone which comprehended the knowledge of more than one life, "I knew him when his father was a boy."

THE RIDING COUNTY.—Hampshire, Hants; Berkshire, Berks; Wiltshire, Wilts; Buckinghamshire, Bucks; Bedfordshire, Beds; Nottinghamshire, Notts; Huntingdonshire, Hunts; what will be short for Yorkshire? Shall we say Yoicks?—Punch.

A TOOTH A YEAR.—A man who wanted to buy a horse asked a friend how to tell a horse's age. "By his teeth," was the reply. The next day the man went to a horse-dealer, who showed a splendid black horse. The horse hunter opened the animal's

month, gave one glance at it, and turned on his heel. "I don't want to see him," said he; he's thirty-two years old." He had counted his teeth.

AN HEIRLOOM.

Mistress: "That's a curious locket you have there, Jane."

Jane: "Yes, mim! It's a reliet of my family."

Mistress: "A reliet?"

Jane: "Yes, mim! (with solemnity) a 'air-b'loom!"

—*Pun.*

THE ONE THING SAFE.—Have the London School Board any schools ready for the reception of scholars? According to the Earl of Shaftesbury, "they have already begun to levy a school rate." Of course. Let the rate-payers hope to get some return for their money. But, whether as regards the re-organization of the army, the education of the masses, or any other measure of legislative progress, there is nothing certain but taxation.—*Punch.*

GOOD BOY!

Waggish Schoolboy (to his uncle, who has just tipped him a sovereign): "But, uncle, do you think mamma would like me to have so much money at once? Hadn't you better make it half?"

[Uncle, who has a sense of humour, rides off delighted].—*Punch.*

A SUGGESTION.

Tottie: "Mamma dear, didn't you say a new servant ought always to have a character with her?"

Mamma: "Yes, dear! Why?"

Tottie: "Then, hadn't auntie better go with Jane when she tries for a new place? I heard Mr. Smith say what a wonderful character auntie was!"—*Pun.*

THE THAMES AND THE TIBER.—It is expected that numerous fine statues will be fished up from the Tiber by the proposed dredging of that classical river. The ancient Romans appear to have had a way of throwing statues into the Tiber. It would effect a real improvement in the look of the British capital if the Londoners were to contract a similar habit; for then the metropolitan statues, but that they would impede navigation, would, most of them, be much better situated than they are now.—*Punch.*

BUNG ON EAST SURREY.

We voted for Watney with 'art and with voice, And the victory won for the man of our choice, Beat 't'other side 'oller, united and 'ole, By a thousand and more at the 'ed of the poll. I always did vote for the Liberal, afore, But now not a bit of it, never no more! That Licensin' Bill my mistake made me see: No Liberals in future, I thank yer, for me. There's some institutions 'im all well to go; But Hingland won't let yer the Bar hoverthrow. A land 'tis of liberty wot we lives in, A land of free trade—yah!—in beer and in gin. Enclosure of commons might pass on the sly, But closin' the Public was too much to try. You dared, you blokes, did you, with Bung interfere? You've found you had got the wrong pig by the ear.—*Punch.*

AN AMUSING INCIDENT.—A stout, portly dame, of decidedly domestic aspect, lately made her way up to one of the attendants at the British Museum, who kept guard, staff in hand, over the public treasures. "Can you tell me, sir, where I can find little Jimmy?" Now, as it happens that a certain other official connected with the building is known by that familiar sobriquet, the natural idea of the official thus appealed to was, of course, to introduce the old lady to his colleague. It was clearly a case of a "country cousin" and a London relative. But, alas! between "little Jimmy" and the old dame no signs of recognition were exchanged. It was plain there was a mistake. After some little trouble the question was finally solved by the old lady herself. "Well, you see, sir, little Jimmy and I were both servants at the same place a good many years ago; but he left before I did, and I had not seen little Jimmy since; and I thought he might be dead. For little Jimmy was one of the oddest men I ever knew; and master often said that when he died he would be stuffed, and put in a glass case and sent to the British Museum. So I thought I might find him here."

CONDITION OF THE ITALIAN CAPITAL.—Rome, it is stated in a letter to the *Débat*, continues to remain in a very neglected condition. The streets are in a deplorable state, the pavement is very faulty, and the lighting is extremely defective. It is but seldom that the streets are watered, and the sewers have not been flushed since the inundation last December. Notwithstanding that the public health is threatened by this neglect, the municipal authorities allow things to take their course.

THE PEABODY TRUST.—The Peabody trustees have just opened a fresh block of lodging-houses in Blackfriars Road, named Peabody Square. The buildings, which have been inspected by the Duke

de Broglie and others interested in the question of working-men's residences, are far in advance of the previous efforts of the trustees, and the only adverse criticism upon them that we have seen is due to the conversion of the sitting-room window-seat into a coal bunk.

THE TRUE MAN.—Nine-tenths of the alleged inhumanity of mankind are owing to their being deceived. If people are sure of an accident or a calamity, crowds hasten to relieve it. By veracity we charm in conversation; by sincerity we influence opinion; by trustworthiness we render friends loving and secure, add to the general confidence of men in men, and by thus strengthening the foundations of society acquire the right to an analogous personal sense of worth and firmness. Truth gives a sense of security to the feeblest man, as lying does of insecurity to the strongest. The true man has but one answer to give to interrogators, one story to tell them, one face to show them, nobody's face to fear.

THE POET'S FIRST BABY.

He's such a small baby? I know it;

I shouldn't lose temper, you say;

But what's to become of the poet

If disturbed in this terrible way?

I would like to bear patiently with him,

But here is the truth I must feel:

To the dunces go ideas and rhythm

When he sets up his squall and his squeal.

I'm a brute? If I am, can I help it?

When my dactyls are galloping fine,

His trouble he chooses to yelp it

In a quasi-hexameter whine.

If he must, then the music were sweeter

Did he vary a little his wail,

Did he whine in a regular metre,

And go up and down in the scale.

He's a dear little fellow? I think so;

Very costly to me, I admit.

Good gracious! what makes the boy wink so?

Shake him up! he'll be off in a fit.

A baby myself once? why, rather,

And squalled just like him, I suppose;

But then you must know that my father

Was only addicted to prose.

I tell you I can't stand the squalling;

I'd rather hear cataracts roar,

A dozen street fish vendors hawking,

A hand-organ ground at the door.

Take him off. Don't you see that I'm busy,

My darling, my precious, my rib?

The angel is sleeping? Ah! is he?

Then carry him off to his crib.

And now I'll sit down to my poem—

They say that it's out of my line;

Let 'em say, but I fancy I'll show 'em

A work that is almost divine.

"Let the Mussulman boast of his houries,

The saint purge his errors with pain;

But for us the calm quiet!"—Oh, furies!

That baby is at it again!

D. T. D. R.

GEMS.

MEN are frequently like tea—the real strength and goodness is not properly drawn out of them till they have been for a short time in hot water.

If you would be known, and not know, vegetate in a village; if you would know, and not be known, live in a city.

When fame is regarded as the end, and merit as only the means, men are apt to dispense with the latter, if the former can be had without it.

As in the motion of a wheel every spoke takes its turn, and bears its stress in like manner, in the whole round of a Christian's conversation, every affection, grace, and duty, at one season or other, comes to be exercised.

EVERYTHING may be mimicked by hypocrisy but humility and love united. The humblest star twinkles most in the darkest night. The more rare humility and love are united, the more radiant are they when they meet.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

TO CLEAN MUDDY WATER.—A little dissolved alum is very effective in clearing muddy water. If thrown into a tub of soap suds, the soap, curdled and accompanied by the mud particles, sinks to the bottom, leaving the water above clear and pure. In times of scarcity of water this may be used again for washing clothes.

TO CLEAN BRASS.—Rub the surface of the metal with rotten-stone and sweet oil, then rub off with a piece of cotton flannel and polish with soft leather.

A solution of oxalic acid rubbed over tarnished brass soon removes the tarnish, rendering the metal bright. The acid must be washed off with water, and the brass rubbed with whiting and soft leather. A mixture of muriatic acid and alum dissolved in water imparts a golden colour to brass articles that are steeped in it for a few seconds.

STATISTICS.

COMMERCE OF VENICE.—The Chamber of Commerce have lately published the following particulars respecting the trade of Venice, which show the increasing prosperity of that city since its annexation to the kingdom of Italy. From this it appears that the total value of the exports in 1870 amounted to 116,688,952 francs, and the imports to 143,942,872 francs, showing a difference in favour of 1870 of 10,847,848 francs over the preceding year in the imports, and 4,470,100 francs in favour of 1869 in the exports. The principal articles of trade were the following:—

	Imports.	Exports.
	Frs.	Frs.
Woven and spun goods...	23,779,960	17,155,680
Cotton	14,636,300	13,113,400
Hemp	13,014,120	12,527,235
Grain	12,928,318	7,338,629
Articles of colonial trade	9,810,575	6,900,980
Oils	8,279,430	8,171,900
Timber	4,599,904	4,662,454
The beads and glass ware, which form a speciality of Venice, figure in the list for the value of 5,612,060 francs. Compared with 1869, a considerable increase in the imports of woven goods, cottons, and timber, and in the exports of hemp, beads, and oils, is shown, which explains the difference in the value of the exports and imports during last year. With respect to cotton, and in general the trade with the East, the statistics of 1870 give most satisfactory results, and the returns since the commencement of 1871 show a still greater increase.		

MISCELLANEOUS.

The vine disease is making great ravages among the grapes in Portugal.

PROPOSED VISIT TO THE EX-EMPEROR.—A large number of Frenchmen both from Paris and the provinces are coming to England with the object of paying visits to the Emperor Napoleon III., the Empress Eugénie, and the Prince Imperial.

The "Abyssinian stretch" has superseded the Grecian bend and the kangaroo droop among the belles of fashion. It is supposed that this will have a short run, as the "Madagascar flutter" and the "Feejeean sprawl" are waiting to be adopted.

PRESENT TO THE MARQUIS OF LOENE.—Earl Spencer has presented the Marquis of Lorne with a Celtic vase of Irish manufacture, modelled by a Dublin silversmith after an antique cup found at Ardagh. The piece of workmanship is as purely Hibernian as may be. Irish wolf dogs are interlaced on the lid, and Irish amethysts set round the body of the vessel. The inscription is an old Irish text, and the plinth is of Irish bog-oak.

LANDLORDS AND TENANTS.—A little bill has passed that effects a very great revolution in the domestic affairs of landlords who count upon their lodgers' goods to defray any executions instituted by the superior landlord. It was a scandalous shame poor Jones the clerk should go home at night and find a dirty "man in possession" sprawling on his sofa with a clay pipe in his mouth, and all the insolence of the broker's man. However, this abuse is now done away with by Parliament, and not before it was time.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AMERICAN CITIES.—"Every state, every city, every village in America," says Macrae, "boasts of something. Massachusetts boasts of her brains; Pennsylvania of her oil wells; Virginia of her illustrious men; Alabama of her cotton; Louisiana of her sugar; California of her big trees; Missouri of her iron mountains; Illinois of her boundless farms; Kentucky of her horses; Canada of her incomparable wheat. Towns stand next. Philadelphia has the longest and straightest streets and the largest orphanage in the country; New Orleans has the smoothest drive and the biggest river trade; Milwaukee has the best bricks; New York has the finest park and the largest population; Boston has the best schools and the biggest organ; Chicago has the biggest saints, the biggest sinners, and the biggest pig-killing establishments in America." According to the *Architect*, Chicago will have another big thing to boast of in the Pacific Hotel, now being built, and expected to be open next spring. It covers nearly an acre and a half, and is all built with Ohio sandstone. From east to west it stretches 325 feet, from north to south 186 feet, and it is 104 feet high. It will cost about 300,000 dols.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

G. M. R.—Compare the pedigrees given in Burke's "Peerage and Baronetage."

MECHANIC.—Try "Ibbotson's Handbook of Turning," to be obtained by order of any respectable bookseller.

W. B.—We are obliged by your note. The error has been already referred to and corrected in this page.

FLORENCE AND CONSTANCE.—The announcement is not sufficiently definite.

C. G. W.—The perusal of your manuscript has not made any favourable impression; it is therefore declined with thanks.

PRESERVATION.—Your handwriting is very good, but we cannot bestow such commendation upon your composition—that is excessively faulty.

S. T.—The union of England and Scotland actually took place on the 1st of May, 1707, having been previously attempted both in 1604 and 1670. The island was then called Great Britain.

A YOUTH.—The motto of the royal arms of England, "Dieu et Mon Droit," was the parole of the day given by Richard I. to his army at the battle of Gisors, in France, and adopted in remembrance of his victory.

B. A. R.—The story is incredible. If it could be supported by evidence, the outrage should by no means be condoned. Such a monstrous proceeding should be exposed at any cost.

GREENY GINGER.—The five specimens of handwriting are all good. Numbers 2, 3, 4, and 5 bear a strong resemblance to each other and are excellent. Perhaps number 5 is the best for business purposes.

E. M.—Your position is hardly suitable for the object you have in view. It will be time enough to take steps in furtherance of that object when your expectations shall have become realized.

J. W. T. (Norwich).—We prefer the expression "he died from the effects of the fall." To use the verb "kill" would rather import that the death was occasioned by the act of another person, which we apprehend was not the case.

SCIENTIST.—By means of the microscope, applied to the detection of air impurities, it has been discovered that a man inhales not less than thirty-one and a half millions of spores, or organic germs, in ten hours from impure air.

D. L.—The rate of human weight carried for a corresponding weight of carriage on railways is out of all proportion to that of road carriages. An omnibus, weighing 1 ton, will carry 30 people, weighing 37 cwt., whereas a first-class railway carriage, weighing 5 tons, conveys only 18 people (if full), weighing 23 cwt.

EMMA T.—1. When certain curls are promised as the result of the adoption of any specific you should always take the promise "with a grain of salt." 2. Believe in the palliative effect of the concoction if you will, but take it warily. A medical man would not prescribe for your disease unless he saw you. In such a serious case you should have good professional advice without delay.

W. W. H.—Your verses are a good specimen of the thoughts and sentiments which abound in the heart of a youth who has been forsaken by his sweetheart. They are well and forcibly written. The closing hehest is somewhat too peremptory, and a chivalrous lover would have managed to express a desire for the welfare of his lost love, although she did break his heart.

ARTHUR.—1. The railway which had the honour of being the first to invade the City of London was opened to the public between Blackwall and a temporary station in the Minories on the 4th of July, 1840. Its total length was then only three miles and a half, but its extension to Fenchurch Street was completed the following year. 2. The Victoria Docks are situated about half a mile below Blackwall.

N. Y.—Such occurrences have certainly taken place within the present century. For instance, Lord Castle-rough and Mr. George Canning fought a duel on Putney Heath in 1809. It is also quite true that William Pitt, the great statesman, and Mr. Tierney risked their lives in an encounter on the same favoured spot, but that event transpired some eleven years before.

ELIZABETH.—1. In making rhubarb jam care should be taken to prepare it at a time when the rhubarb is fresh and young. Having wiped the rhubarb stalks (do not wash them), peel and cut them up into half-inch pieces, put into a preserving-pan equal weights of rhubarb and loaf sugar, and the juice of two lemons to every five pounds of rhubarb and sugar. Boil slowly, constantly stirring, and then boil for three-quarters of an hour, skimming as long as scum rises or till it becomes a smooth

pulp and a thick jam which leaves the bottom of the pan when stirred. The grated rind of one lemon may be added to each pound of rhubarb and sugar. Vegetable marrow jam can be made in a similar way, though to this description of fruit ginger is often substituted for lemon as a flavouring essence. 2. The remedy for the gaping alluded to is simply a good night's rest.

JOHN P.—1. You should first learn to play the cornet or clarinet, acquiring at the same time proficiency in the technicalities of music. For this purpose you should receive tuition at competent hands. Book knowledge alone will not enable you to succeed. Then place yourself in a position where promotion is possible, and work hard. 2. Suitable medicine, exercise, and regimen, to be more accurately described by a medical man after consultation.

AN ADMIRER.—When in London you should carefully peruse the play-bills of the day, or the advertisements of theatrical performances inserted in the daily journals. The absence of the individual's name, of whom you are in search, from the above announcements will be a very fair intimation that he is not performing in London, while with the appearance of his name you will also discover the precise place at which you may once more listen to the talent which you so much admire.

R. S.—We prefer to give you credit for enthusiasm rather than stubbornness, and to admire your enthusiasm because it results from estimable thoughts and feelings. By all means write on if it affords you gratification of any kind. Whenever anything you send appears to be suitable for publication we shall with pleasure hand it to the printer for that purpose. Judging, however, from your specimens now under consideration, we are afraid that your perseverance will struggle for a long time ere it is crowned with reward.

FORGET ME NOT.

Forget me not:
When other hearts shall bless thee,
When other lips address thee,
When others praise thy beauty,
Envy thy lot,

Do thou but think on duty:
Forget me not:

When others' tales malign me
Oh! let thy love entwine me,
Still with a faith unshaken
Wipe out the blot;

Truth shall ere long awaken:
Forget me not.

Forget me not:
Sunshine is all about thee,
Life would be naught without thee;
My heart could rest with gladness
In one lone spot,

If thou in joy or sadness
Forget me not.

Forget me not:
If my Creator call me,
This clay cannot enthrall me;

To dust the dust is given,
There let it rot;

But I shall be in heaven:
Forget me not. W. W. H.

L. W.—The substance usually sold under the name of white gutta percha is little better than a composition of three parts of white oxide of zinc, mixed with one of gutta percha, and is really valueless for all ordinary purposes. Pure white gutta percha may be prepared by digesting shreds of that material in methylated chloroform, in which it dissolves; the solution is then to be filtered in close vessels. On the addition of spirits of wine to the liquid the gutta percha is precipitated as a white pulpy mass, which is easily converted into a solid by heat, and cooling.

E. Y.—We do not comply with your request because in our opinion astrology is an exploded science, and its professors should be discountenanced. The foolish curiosity which perpetually tries to look into futurity should be discouraged, and in its stead should be inculcated the importance of filling the time as it flies with good deeds, ever and again renewed and strengthened. Though circumstances alter our destiny, yet are our honour and happiness to a great extent in our own keeping, and the notion of responsibility well implanted in the mind is likely better to lead an individual to happiness than any star-gazing about fate can possibly do. You should woo virtue and prosperity by enlisting hearty endeavour on your side. More to indulge in dreamy expectations is to court misfortune.

EXPERIMENT.—The old method of silvering glass is that of laying on the clean surface of glass a sheet of tinfoil, rubbing this gently over with mercury and applying pressure; a coating of an amalgam of tin is thus formed, as seen in the ordinary looking-glass. By this plan only flat surfaces can be well silvered, but by the following, any surface, as a bottle, hollow globe, etc., may be readily silvered. A solution of 10 grains of pure nitrate of silver is made in an ounce of distilled water, and to this is added, drop by drop, liquor ammoniac until all precipitate is exactly redissolved. This should be kept in a glass stoppered bottle out of the light. A second solution is to be made as follows: Dissolve 10 grains of pure Rochelle salts in an ounce of distilled water, and filter the solution through white blotting-paper. To silver a glass, if a globe, etc., fill it with equal quantities of the time as it flies with good deeds, ever and again renewed and strengthened. Though circumstances alter our destiny, yet are our honour and happiness to a great extent in our own keeping, and the notion of responsibility well implanted in the mind is likely better to lead an individual to happiness than any star-gazing about fate can possibly do. You should woo virtue and prosperity by enlisting hearty endeavour on your side. More to indulge in dreamy expectations is to court misfortune.

ANNA, tall, good looking, fond of home, in a good position. Respondent must be a persevering young man; a tradesman preferred.

ANNIE and LIZZIE.—"Annie," thirty, 5ft. 2in., dark hair and eyes, good looking, domesticated, and has a small income. "Lizzie," twenty-five, 5ft. 4in., fair hair,

blue eyes, good looking, domesticated, with a small income. Tradesmen who are members of the Catholic Church preferred.

CATHERINE, twenty-two, medium height, fair complexion, dark brown hair and eyes; considered pretty. Respondent must be tall and manly in appearance.

EMILY, a blonde, eighteen, would like to marry a gentleman who is dark, good tempered, musical, and lively.

FRECY, nineteen, 5ft. 10in., dark eyes, hair, and complexion, handsome, and has good prospects. Respondent must be dark, of a stately figure, and highly accomplished.

CONSTANTINE, twenty-three, medium height, light complexion, good natured, well educated, and in a good position. Respondent must be young, pretty, well educated, and amiable.

NELLIE, nineteen, medium height, black hair and light eyes, musical, good tempered, ladylike, and merry. Respondent must be about twenty-five, tall, dark, loving, good tempered, and well educated.

THE BEAU OF THE FLEET, twenty, medium height, fair, good looking, and lively. Respondent must be about seventeen, medium height, fair, merry, good tempered, a native of London, and able to love a sailor truly.

VIOLET GREY, twenty-four, tall, ladylike, dark brown hair and eyes, fair skin, cheerful, and a good housekeeper. Respondent should be about thirty, tall, good looking, steady, fond of home, and in a good position.

ADONIS, eighteen, 5ft. 9in., very fair, light hair, blue eyes, well educated, good tempered, and affectionate. Respondent should have dark hair and eyes, good domestic qualities, be well educated, sincere and loving, and under the above age.

NAILED TO THE MAST, twenty-three, 5ft. 4in., fair complexion, light hair, whiskers, and moustache. Can sing and dance, has a lively disposition, and is a sailor in the Navy. Respondent must be fair, of medium height, be able to sing well, and love a sailor.

LIZZIE and JENNIE.—"Lizzie," twenty-five, medium height, clear complexion, dark eyes, fair hair. "Jennie," twenty, dark hair, brown eyes, rather short, very loving, both very cheerful and domesticated. Respondents must be dark and fond of home.

E. A. B., a widow, medium height, fair, ladylike, fond of home, loving disposition, industrious, has an income of twenty pounds a year, and a very comfortable home. Respondent must be sincere, industrious, and affectionate.

MONTHLY ROSE, eighteen, medium height, fair complexion, blue eyes, and brown hair. Respondent must be a respectable mechanic or warehouse clerk, tall, dark, between twenty and twenty-three, and have a sufficient salary to support a wife.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

FREDERICO is responded to by—"Alice," seventeen, 5ft. 2in., very fair, rosy complexion, soft blue eyes, glossy golden hair, regular features, educated, loving, musical, and domesticated; and—"Minnie," dark hair and eyes, rosy complexion, loving, musical, and will have two hundred pounds on her wedding-day.

MAUD by—"Charlie," tall, gentlemanly, good looking, and in a good position.

MAGGIE B. by—"Blacksmith," twenty-five, earning good money, and of steady habits.

ETHEL by—"Flying Squadron," twenty, tall, dark, of good education, good tempered, loving, and in the Navy.

G. W. by—"Rose Grey," who would like to receive his carte, with particulars as to situation or trade in which he is employed.

T. H. by—"Edith S.," a tradesman's daughter, eighteen, medium height, dark hair and eyes, well educated, can sing and play the piano.

MAUD by—"T. B.," twenty-four, tall, dark, affectionate, fond of home, and will forward carte on an acknowledgment of this.

RALPH and EDMUND by—"Lucy and Kate." They are domesticated, and would make good wives. Kate is twenty-two, Lucy twenty-one; both fair, loving, amiable, and fond of home; and—"Lizzie and Nellie." Lizzie is nineteen, of medium height, good figure, brown eyes and hair, cheerful disposition. Nellie is eighteen, tall, dark, genteel figure, amiable disposition. Both are domesticated, and would make good wives for working men.

EMILY and ELIZABETH have not sent any personal description.

DARK-EYED JENNY thinks "Frank W." would just suit her, and wishes to hear from him, with his carte.

CAMILLA is pleased with the description of "Caxton," and would like to receive his carte; she will send here in return.

DEFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS.—The following being in some or many particulars deficient cannot be inserted: "O. C.," "Lucy," "Annie," and "Marrie."

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